

# Indian

# Married

# Life



## The undercurrents!



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This book was written by me around 1999, when a prominent publisher from New Delhi gave me this specific topic to write on. However, I did not complete the writing to my own satisfaction. Even today, a huge part of what I had planned to write still remains inside my head.

When I recently went through this writing, I found that it is having a lot of readable points. So, I am publishing this book in an *as-it-is* form. Since it was written for another publisher, with a specific aim, the writing style is slightly different from my current writing style.

Moreover, this writing has a tone of an *instructor imparting learning*. I must admit that I cannot don the mantle of an instructor or coach in the subject matter that I have dealt with. However a lot of points have been discussed, which the reader may find quite interesting to ponder upon.

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## Introduction

There are, no doubt, a lot of writings on the theme of *happy married life*. And it still is a theme, which can be discussed from various angles, given the variety in human experience.

There are a lot of good books on this theme written by English authors of the west. And if one reads them, at least from some of them, one would get a lot of very good ideas that could help a person get a better understanding of the various dimensions of this highly complex theme. Since human psychological reactions and reflexes are more or less, the same all over the world, in a general way, many of the things said could apply to the Asians and among them the Indians, also. But there is slight yet distinct difference in the Asian social experience from that of the English social experience. It is in this context that this book is going to be of use to the reader.

The topic is definitely a complex one, given the



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resourcefulness of the human imagination and its mysterious ways of working. There are so many things that are brought into the fore when two human beings decide to forge an alliance, the like of which is not seen in any other spheres of partnership. It involves so many things, which are not conceivable, when the idea of such a partnership is first proposed. And, indeed, it cannot be limited to any terms and conditions that can be put into paper as in the case of a business partnership, even though it must be admitted that there are persons who have tried that also.

It involves so many variables, each one of them pertaining to a lot of interrelated things, all of them sensitive to many other factors. When a man marries a woman, in the Indian context, what join together are not just the two persons, but also a lot of other things. It is an action that provokes reactions at many other places and among so many other persons that it is a thing to be handled with velvet gloves



and done with delicate care. Those who have not heeded this warning have lived to grasp the intense significance of this statement.

Married life is not seen here as an experiment, but as one of plunging with no aim of returning to the base if there is a problem. Once in it, one has to swim on and on, with the partner, one has chosen. And don't doubt when I say that the affinity of the partners to each other can make a big difference in how efficiently they can swim in the tidal waves that bear upon life.

**Indian culture and languages:** Before entering a detailed dissertation on this theme, I would like to say something about Indian culture and languages. In India, very few people think or talk in English, at the everyday level of social interaction. Most Indian thinking and interactions are more or less in the vernacular. The peculiarities of these languages do affect the norms of interaction.



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Indian languages are, more or less, feudal in structure. That means Indian languages discern society as a hierarchical set-up and the wordings are in such a manner, so as to keep this structure intact. There are many levels in society, and these are denoted by the words used in addressing, and referring to a person. In India, the actuality is that many of the levels at times do overlap or do exist in an array of confusing social altitudes. And it also brings about a string of relationships, all members of which are arranged in particular levels of relationships, with some persons coming above another person and some ending up below others. This sort of arrangement has a factor of direction to it, in terms of who should display respect to whom. Husbands, wife, parents, their relatives all come in this web of relationship, with a concurrent web of direction of *respect* to go with it. Along with it comes a sort of authority a relative or elder has on another person.



Now, in this discourse on married life that I am going to start, all these themes make it different from a typical book on married life written by an English author on the English people. And the reader may bear in mind that it is not a discussion on idealistic factors, but about the ground realities of the Indian social scene.



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### What all things to think of before agreeing to a marriage?

Usually in the typical Indian social condition, marriages are arranged by the family. In this context, family may just mean the parents or may, as in most cases, mean the whole lot of relatives of the person to be married. They proceed through well-established routes of social conventions, to achieve a result, which is, more or less, acceptable to all family members and to the society at large.

Many of the things I am going to touch in this chapter on the issues that should be thought of before fixing up a marriage, are, more or less, done by the family members in an automatic conditioned manner. In fact, the whole affair of prospecting does all these things in a much understated manner.

**Mental readiness:** But before we go into all that let us see how mentally ready the persons, who are to marry, are to be. Men, especially



from among the average middle class Indians, are ready to marry only when they have a sustainable job, or a reliable source of income. For, such a standing is required for a person to exist in society as a respectable person. Now, there is no dispute that this should be so. But it need not be so, also. It depends on the family of the person, his mental acumen, and his spirit of enterprise.

Since everything is intertwined in with so many other factors, that can be discussed only later, we can go to a simple form of discussion on this theme, for the present. If the family is supportive and understanding, the person can marry without a reliable source of income, provided the family has income on its own. But here it may be stated that the person should be wary of certain other things, such as that the parents or other members may be having other vested interests in getting him married. For, many parents like to have an unpaid servant who cannot escape, even though there is no



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chain as the slaves were made to wear. If this factor has been thought of and found to be not relevant, then the person can agree to a marriage.

A person, who is not living with his parents, or family, but on his own, can also plan for marriage. Even if he is finding it difficult to make ends meets, he need not be deterred from this. For living alone is not cheaper than living as a couple. In fact, living alone as a bachelor is more expensive. And socially, more unacceptable. Once married the person will find that he is having more access to family circles than he had as a single person. The only thing he should be careful about, is to get a woman as his wife who is willing to put in the extra efforts to make his earnings last longer.

But this issue may be complicated by the existence of her relatives who might or might not be a help. This theme also requires a lot of analysis, which can be done at a later stage



along with the discussion on wife's relatives.

**Health:** The second factor is that of the man's health. If there is anything that can stand as a barrier to a happy married life, the person involved should first try to get rid of this factor. For, otherwise the mythical bliss of married life will be inaccessible. And could be the cause of more mental pain, later.

**Place of residence:** Third, there should be a place of residence to bring the bride to, where the married persons can live a life of a married couple. If there is any lacking in this factor also, there is no meaning in getting married.

**Mental attitude of the other family members:** Apart from this, there is another factor that has to be understood with all the seriousness possible. What is the mental attitude of the other members of the family, who live in the same house, where the husband and wife are to live? If they are the types, who would make the girl's life a hell, then a possible place to



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move off after marriage should be contemplated. In this aspect, the man should not be misled by his love for his parents, for they may or may not have love for him. But if they have a crooked mind, that aims to wreak havoc on his married life, he has to be ready to fend for himself. In this context, a very shocking and at the same time unnerving thing must be divulged. That is, there are many parents who have their own purposes and agenda, and love for their children is only accidental and not always without ulterior motives. This is not a general case, but when one is in a precarious condition, it is only good to have an understanding of this theme. Persons, who find that their parents are trying to attach strings of gratitude on to them, ought to be careful. For, in such cases, it is possible that the parent has a motive in his or her display of affections. But generally, in cultured families, the theme of unconditional love for their children is there.



Make it work: Above all, the marrying person should want to get married and have a mental preparation to make it work.

Prospecting: Now we can go into the basis of the process called prospecting. Indian marriage is very much different from the marriages of the English world in this aspect. We discern society to be divided into various levels, with persons existing in varying mental frameworks. All aspects of living, which include behaviour, respect, companionship, access to places of authority, general standing in society, posture etc. are all dependant on this aspect of one's social level. It is more or less created and then accentuated by the hierarchical languages. Not many people will admit this character of our society, but it remains as a reality. In marriage prospecting this is a major theme; one which remains as a very forceful, yet non-tangible factor. And the fact is that this factor should be thought of very, very carefully before any confirmation of engagement is



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done. The one place where this is not taken much heed of is in the case of love marriages. Persons, who go through love marriage without thought for this aspect, may cause much pain for not only themselves, but also for many others who may include their relatives, friends etc.

**The maze of relationships:** When two persons get married, it is not just two persons who are getting related. A whole lot of persons are getting related. The bridegroom's father, mother, uncles, aunts, cousins, and other distant relatives are all getting related. And the bride is getting a position in the bridegroom's house, and the bridegroom will have a position in the bride's house. Now in a country, where there is a factor of respect surrounding everyone, which depends on many aspects such as social position, family, financial status etc. the wrong person in the midst of others could cause the utmost agony and social problems. The problem is that of the *birds of*



*the same feather flocking together* issue in that, persons of different cultural background have different mannerisms and ways of speech, which combined with the factor of respect can cause havoc on the social scene. The very communication with the different relatives could be painful and may end up, in there being absolute cutting off of communication.

Aversion for lowering of respect: And, again in a country, where the language insists that one should be given the respect by one's address and class of companions & acquaintances, many of the relatives wouldn't like to acquire a connection which may bring them to the levels of *non-respect* or *disrespect*.

Appraisal by the servant class: Also, if the person is one who the serving class of the family cannot respect, then also there might be some problem, which may or may not continue. {For, basically Indian languages



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maintain the lower classes in very powerful positions, from where they can measure and lend marks to each person. Everyone is wary of the disrespect of the lower class. The disrespect of the higher or equal class is a symbol of competition, but the same from the lower class is *social death*}.

But it must be admitted that very rarely do such things happen, for marriages are done through proper enquiry by the family members. And in most cases, the marrying persons are also very much aware of this factor, and take the utmost care to see that no mistake takes place.

Cultural themes: Now we come into other factors about marriage. It concerns cultural background. Though it may be argued that our country is uniformly progressing for the sake of argument, the reality is that our country is moving in different directions. Some persons are going into the liberated form of living and thinking standards, (here I do not mean



anything bad or negative), and many are going into more and more conservative form of family life. Considering from this aspect, it would be a grave mistake for a girl from the former culture to get married to the latter culture. For, then it could mean the end of the life, she has been used to. And it is not a very good argument to say that in life, one doesn't get everything one wants, and that one should adjust to what one gets. The intelligent way is not to find something that does not suit one. Girls who have been brought up with daring and guts should not step into an atmosphere where every moment would be painful.

But boys, who have been brought up in the liberated manner, can take a risk of marrying into a conservative family, if they have the means to be away from that culture in his regular life. Only thing is that he should be able to see that his in-laws don't come in the way of his ideas of living. And that could happen if he has to live in places, which are near to his



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wife's home.

**Knowledge of English:** In this aspect of marriage, knowledge of English is also a factor. This language, by its very liberated and cosmopolitan words and usage gives a person a lot of individuality that may not be understood in the vernacular. So, when girls who are good in English communication, and has at least some of its aspects of behaving, marry a person who is not attuned to this, then it could be the starting point of problems, especially if they do live after marriage in an ordinary Indian town, away from the cosmopolitan culture. It would be advisable to look for similar aspects in such cases in the prospective bridegroom also. It would be a disastrous mistake to think that in this case *opposites would attract*.

At the same time in Indian conditions, the case of the English-knowing male marrying a non-English knowing female is not the same as above. For, many of the English-knowing boys



do not mind a wife, who does not know English. They are happy with the homely housewife who goes about in the traditional manner. At the same time, if the husband is good in English and wants his wife to be of the same culture, he can get her accustomed to it, though it may take time. In this case, the chance of a bruised ego, is very much less, and so one irritant in married life is less. Yet, a little more needs to be said about this, as a caution. It will be dealt with later.



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The varying castes: Now we come to the case of the culture as exhibited by the different castes. Through the ages, of varying social experiences, the various castes have acquired characteristic mannerisms, attitude, dialects, peculiar usage of pejoratives etc. And this problem is also there in the sub-castes and also among the people of the same caste, but living in different geographical locations. In all these cases, for persons who are not living a life of high individualism, acquired and maintained by good financial resources and good professional qualifications, it is better to marry from among the people of the same culture. For, in such cases, there is no uprooting of culture, or cutting-up of relationships. But again, there are persons, who can rise above this need to get away from the stifling traditions and ways of life. They can opt to keep a wider range of selection in choosing their spouse.

The persons, who have lived a life in which



they have not been embedded in the traditions of their own castes and tribes, or religions, and are reasonably well versed in the ways of the world, need not worry about the stranglehold of the native culture. This may appear in the form of antipathy of prominent persons of the community. They can dare to choose from among their professional community or some other interacting group.

The attitude of the spouse: Yet, they have to be wary of one thing. That is, that the spouse may be deeply embedded in his or her own community. Or he or she may have family relations who may not rise up to his level of liberated thoughts. Once married, he or she may have to adjust with this factor throughout life. So, if decisions are being made on such marriages, this factor should also be thought of with adequate equanimity. For, in the presence of relatives or in a native cultural environment, a spouse could exhibit unbelievable metamorphosis in temperament. And the other



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individual will have to adjust to live with another personality, of the spouse.

A career girl: Now we come into the question of, *should a man marry a career girl or not*. In many cases, it is an absolutely individual decision. There are men who prefer a wife who is earning and adding to the family's income. And others who are always available at home, doing the odd things in the home, which include taking care of the food preparation, looking after the children, taking care of the aged parents etc.

And again, though some men may not mind the wife working in the government service, they may not be able to bear their wife working in a private firm. The former may give his wife more social prominence, while the other may give her a position of servitude to another individual. This problem is more in conservative area, where vernacular is the language of communication. This is not exactly



the social environment in high-class English-speaking private or corporate firms, where the staffs, including the women, get a lot of individuality and freedom of articulation.

Apart from this aspect, there is a different atmosphere when the husband is in a position of acute subordination to an individual or individuals. In this case, he may not like his wife to be a person from this same professional arena. But then, they may have met each other and got engaged in the same suppressive atmosphere. Then it may not matter, or if it matters, the wife may have to stop working there.

Then the question of, *who should a professionally qualified person marry?* Again it is a question that can be answered best by the individuals concerned. A male doctor marrying a female doctor could be a union, which would have a lot of ideal aspects in terms of professional practise. But, if the man needs



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someone for looking after his home, then such a relationship could leave a lot of undone jobs in hand. For, a doctor is one who is 24 hours on the professional plane. And in many cases, would find it difficult to allot time to look after the various aspects of housekeeping, which will include, apart from taking care of food preparation, shopping for the daily necessities, taking care of the neatness of the house and linen and many other things, the duty, nay the responsibility, of bringing up children also. But again, it depends on the person, and for there are exceptions that can prove the rule. But, among ordinary individuals, it is a combination, that might not get the best of either, that of a good lady doctor or a good housewife. Yet, it must be admitted that if the housekeeping part is handled by some other persons in the family, then it could be a great combination.

In this context, it may be said that there is a lot of ideal situations in the husband and wife being from the same professional background.



For, it could make them a team, which could be the envy of many other partnerships. But then in this aspect, if the husband is having an uncomfortable standard among his fellow professionals, it may not be a conducive atmosphere, if his wife is also a daily witness to his discomfiture. And in this case, the husband may not enjoy the presence of his wife near him. But, again it depends, for, if it is a really understanding wife, that he has been lucky to get, then they may in time be able to turn discomfiture into an atmosphere of ease.

**Girls with superlative attributes:** Then we come into the general aspirations of men when they aim to marry, such as that the girl should be tall, fair, beautiful, convent educated, rich, from good financial background etc. all in superlatives, and such other things. There is nothing wrong in these aspirations; and it may be possible to get all these yearnings satiated. However before making the decision on the life partner, both women and men should see if



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there is any aspect to this person, which is really unbearable to his or her mental conditioning. Such things as looks, wherein if the looks and expression cause intense distress, or is incompatible; gesture, postures, any of which could cause intense irritation due to some cause; some family member who is close to the person, and who will be a part of the parcel, who has a temperament which is not endurable; a disposition to excessive drinking; keeps the company of a particular level of persons, which is not conducive for happy social interaction; etc. Such things, if possible should be perceived, and if there are really unbearable aspects to this person, then if there is a choice, it is better to aim for a better choice.



A theme on leadership: Also, a man should strive to marry a woman who can see him as her leader. For marriage is teamwork, with a very clear position of a leader in view. Like this, a woman should strive to marry only a person who comes above her in attributes, at least to her own understanding. Generally women from the labour classes, and such other groups should seek men who are from the physically endowed class, rather than the intellectual class. For, it is very much possible that they may not understand the finer elements of high class/intellectual levels. Again women who mentally are in the intellectual class should aim for men from the intellectual class. Here again, the term intellectual class can have a variety of meanings. And also, the concept of *at home in English* class also need to be understood as another definition of intellectual class; even though it may have a different definition and understanding. There is also the need to think of leadership in the wife also, but that we can



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deal with later.

Government employees: The general tendency is that a government servant is seen as having a security in life, and enough and more income. If persons aim for this, then aim for one. In the feudal culture, that prevails in our country, such a match could get a person access to social prominence. But at the same time, good businessmen or persons who are active in the numerous other activities, which are what actually propels the country forward, are also not a bad proposition. And their life has the charm of the uncertainty that could send the married couple to unimaginable heights and a variety of glorious experiences. And these persons could have a more informed living standard, which the government servant may not be able to match, other than the feudal stature they may be able to exhibit with careful premeditation. But in our country, a failure is also a horrifying experience, especially for the non-government



employed.

Ideological affiliations: Before marrying, such minor things, as vegetarians aiming for vegetarians and non-vegetarians aiming for non-vegetarians can also be thought about. And persons having the faith in the same deity also, is a nice thing. And if they both have similar ideological or religious philosophies etc. then it might bring in a degree of cohesion in their mental attitudes. But similarities in political beliefs and affiliations to political parties may or may not be useful. But in our nation's conditions, unless anyone of the spouses is a party functionary or a person with ferocious attitudes of loyalty to a party, there is no need to give much importance to such things.

A factor of astrology: This has become a major factor in marriages. Especially among the Hindus. There are persons from other communities also who get an advice from this



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source when making up their minds on fixing the marriage. There is no need to go into the merit of this, here. It may or may not be a reliable science. And if one does not have any faith in this, then there is no need to worry about it. If all other aspects are okay, they can go ahead with the marriage. But in this case, there should be a mental commitment not to go and seek advice on compatibility from any astrologer, once the marriage has been consummated. For, then it would be playing with fire. For, at that moment, a dissertation on compatibility from a rank outsider would amount to rank disloyalty to the spouse. And any negative input that might come from him at a stage when the marriage is much old could induce incompatibility in a family where there was none. In this context, it may be remembered that life has times of ebb and those of swells. And the need of the hour might be to fortify, not to wither.

In the case of those who do believe in



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astrology, it is good that they consult a good astrologer. And when making a final decision, it is good if they get a second opinion in this regard.

In this case also there are certain things that should be noted. There are usually two broad systems of astrology followed in our country. The western and the eastern. The majority of people have access to the eastern version. Both are, more or less, compatible to each other.

In the usual circumstances about ten main factors are taken up for analysis of compatibility, which are more or less done in a automated manner. And if the positive compatibility factors count above five in number, then the usual practise is to declare the persons as compatible.

Now, what has to be borne in mind is that generally in small towns and villages the general tendency of the astrologer is not to



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hinder a marriage, as the formalities that usually reach the stage of consulting an astrologer would have been considerable. He would not want to play the spoilsport in the life of a girl or a boy. This factor has to be borne in mind in these circumstances. For, he might give the go ahead, if he does not see any grave dangers, but there may still be significant negative spots.

Another thing is that this count of more than five points of compatibility is not a dependable measure unless on what all qualities compatibility has been seen and on what all points incompatibility has been discerned. Usually astrologers won't divulge it on their own. One has to specifically ask question pointedly to get a focused answer. If it is not asked, then it won't be mentioned. Beyond that, in spite of there being compatibility on this score, there might be mighty problems in the matching of the planet positions, which again may have been dealt in a cursory manner.



There might be problems of financial instability, mental incompatibility, issues of infidelity, and such other things, which the astrologer may not find it significant enough to mention. It may be mentioned here that certain horoscopes match fantastically, and certain others don't.

Then there is the problem of downright dishonest astrologers, who may simply say the wrong things. For, what purpose, god alone knows! And it may be mentioned here that the practise of influencing the astrologer, when the other party is scheduled to visit him is also, in vogue, in our country.

Another important thing about going to the astrologer is that, do not allow anyone else to do it. As far as possible, let the person who is going to get married himself, or herself, get the consultation. Relatives and friends may be relieved of this responsibility. For, in all such cases, a factor of what the relative or friend needs may also creep in. In this nation, where



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treacherous behaviour is way of life, it might be good to go to an astrologer, without telling anyone else who it is one is consulting. Even though this may seem a silly suggestion, in situations, where one needs to protect oneself from being cheated, this is a very good stance.

**Validating the information:** Apart from all this, before agreeing to a marriage, the concerned person himself, or herself, should go through all the facts. Never jump into this most important event on the word of anyone, even if they are his, or her own, mother or father. And don't do it unless this person has seen his or her prospective spouse, with his or her own eyes, and liked what is proposed. In this aspect also trust no one, other than one's own judgement and intuition.

**When love comes calling:** In the case of love marriages, all these cautions may be thrown to the wind. For, the persons involved may believe that it is a very personal issue that is



being negotiated, and that their own judgements and desires are the only thing that matter. In fact, that is how it should be. But outside the domain of the sphere of their mental atmosphere, the world and society are very different. In a society, as is seen in our country, it would be difficult to continue in such a manner, if the persons involved are depending on their relatives and their community for their livelihood, or are interacting with them on a daily basis. Sometimes they, with their stubbornness and boldness, may be able to get on their way in the midst of their relatives, but it may cause deep resentment and sorrow in them.

It is useless to advice when love of a deep nature is involved. It is something almost all human beings are vulnerable to. But a sense of propriety and a mental maturity in this matter would be highly welcome. In the Indian context, love affairs do suffer from certain shortcomings. First of all is the sort of effect,



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which I would call, the *Miranda effect* as seen in *Tempest*, in which the lady Miranda falls in love with the first human being she has seen other than her father. The story does not deal with the fallacy of this effect, but it is a general human phenomenon.

When a girl who has led a secluded life comes to meet someone from the outside world who impresses her as being of a dynamic character, in the small, secluded settings in which she happens to meet him on a regular basis, a feeling akin to attraction and love could blossom. As far as the man is concerned, it would really tickle his ego, to see that he is the cause of so much emotion in a female. Such type of love affairs, between persons who haven't had the occasion to interact with a wider world, don't have much to recommend them, as, as interactions with more persons come about, there could be more such occasions, which could cause more intense emotional reactions. At the same time,



the chances of marriages based on such romances succeeding or failing cannot be computed on the basis of the quality of the romance. Their success and failure could depend on the other external factors, which include the financial condition of the couples and the other various factors enumerated above.

Forced association with the distasteful: Apart from this, as has been mentioned earlier, in our country due to the severe stratification in society, persons are extremely choosy about whom they want to associate with or to relate with. If the daughter or son goes forth and marry someone who brings in associations and relations of person who the parents can't bear, tolerate, or be mentally comfortable with, then there could be severe reactions, which might include even ostracism. Or if that is not possible, they, the parents, might themselves move out of the area. This is a social reality in our country.



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In the case of persons, who have interacted with the world and know what is what and what they want to do with their lives, the idea of finding out a life partner through romance is not a bad thing at all. But, in most cases these practical and mature persons would opt for a marriage that would not inconvenience their many relatives and acquaintances, on whom they depend on for their enjoyment of daily interaction. They would not want their marriage to be a problem to anyone, least of all to themselves. For, their energies and time could be better spent on more profitable things than the issue of a troublesome marriage.

A bit of inside information: Before marriage, there is one more thing that can be checked up, if possible. This is of more importance in the case of women who are going to get married. That is the type of house she has to go and live after her marriage. If it is in her husband's house, with his parents, then an idea of how they might behave to her once she



goes over to live with them would be very valuable information, especially if she is going to be a housewife. And about how many others are living there. And about them. And also about the space constraints or its absence in the house. It is known that some persons have even been specific about getting knowledge about the toilets therein.



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### What all things to do to make it sustain?

The vow: The one thing that can make a marriage work is a commitment to make it work, on both sides. In cases of unbearable circumstances, it may be a tough proposition. But the very moment one gets married, there should be a silent vow that he, or she, would put his or her best effort to get it working, whatever may be the obstacles. And when the obstacles start coming up, it would seem that the vow was a pretty tough one. But it would be worth it.

Indulgences: When one has the money, a good job, a good house and all the positive things, that sometimes come a person's way, it is easy to make a marriage work. And also to spoil it. For, such times of luxury could also be the times of indulgences. A husband may not see the finer aspects of a wife who, like a shadow, may arrange the simpler things in life



for him, without which one can't exist in decent company, in the midst of glory and attention. And a wife may be unmindful of the needs of a husband, which may be attended to by an inconsiderate servant, or by an over-attentive maid. Children could have tuition teachers. The garden could have a gardener. In fact, everything could have somebody, but the husband may not have the wife and vice versa.

In such a situation, there may be a marriage in existence, but only in a shallow, superficial sense. For, what is a married life, if there is no active communication on a regular basis? This communication can be on many things. It can be on the dismal things, the laughable incidents, the failures, the glories, and on so many things that can make a home a place where the very walls would reverberate with the tone of marital bliss. The happy interactions with children, a film seen together, a walk in the park in each other's company, the wait for the other to arrive, a weekly shopping



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together, all these things are essential components of a happy married life. It may be seen that these are not difficult things to accomplish. For the rich these cost nothing, unless they reckon time to be more valuable than their marital life.

When the going gets tough: However, in a family where it is a daily struggle against odds to survive and the going gets tougher, then it could be a real test of the strength of the marriage fabric. Couples can react in different ways to this testing situation. It could be one of constant blaming of one another or by one on the other; or it could be a time to show the solidarity that exists between the husband and wife.

The sacred precedence: Even in rich families, there can come irritants to a happy family life. It could come in many ways. But the basics of this may be a casual attitude to the spouse, by the other, or by both to each. There should be



an understanding by both, that their family is the first and foremost thing for them in the whole world. It is second to none else. All things, such as relatives including parents, friends, career, hobbies, money, travel etc. all come behind this sacred institution, in the grand scheme of things. Children come in the ambit of this family, and strictly above the level of all these afore mentioned items.

It would seem an unkind thing when I say that mother and father come second in this list. That is how it should be, if your spouse loves his or her parents, then let it be your duty to add on to it; if he or she is disinterested or hates them, let it not be your burden, to make amends for this.

**When contraries get attached:** It is said that contraries get attracted. Well, if that is so, let it be so. But if persons with contrary bends of mind get married, it need not be a perfect isolation of each other's sphere of activities



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and career. Let each of them talk to each other about the ecstasies and also, of the apprehensions they experience in their fields of activity.

A hero under duress: No wife should demand a role of a hero from her husband, for it could put him under pressure to perform to that level. It would be like being in a film story. A film story runs only in bits, but in real life, scenes progress as in a procession, with many other situations of varying emotions interspersing events of connection. In real life, when every event is considered there is very rarely any person who can be a 24-hour hero. A man of rare courage and daring in certain activities, could also be a man of uncommon timidity and trembling in other situations. A woman should aim for a human as a husband, not a supernatural being.

Likewise, let no man expect superhuman abilities in a wife. She has only the capabilities



a human body can perform, even though this body can perform with exceeding qualities in times of contingencies. However, that is only in such times. To expect your wife to continue in that fashion as a way of life is expecting the impossible.

Of being *at home*: In the ordinary Indian home, the husband takes care of the income earning part and the wife takes care of the house. Actually, there have been corrections to this model in many places of the world. Yet, in India, in many places this is an accepted way of life. When the husband comes home, after interacting with the wide world, with a lot of tensions and, possibly of many pleasant feelings, it is the duty of the wife to see that he comes into a world of cheer and happiness. Not one where he is bothered with more distracting problems than he can bear. Let these daily interactions be one filled with a lot of sharing of pleasant thoughts. With the evening tea or the night supper, let the various



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things that are of interest to the family as a whole be discussed with a lot of caring for each other's sensitive spots. In life, there are always a lot of things that come one after another that lead to disturbances of mental equilibrium. The duty of the wife is to see that the husband is given an atmosphere that enlivens his spirit and not one that pricks his ego.

**Partnership with sacred motives:** However, on the husband side, let him not seek an uncomplaining machine in his wife. For, in our country, many men marry for getting an unpaid servant, who would do all the jobs such as making food, cleaning the utensils, washing the clothes, feeding the children, sweeping the floor etc., which also comes with a package of callous sex. Such persons though they may get all these, may miss the essential bliss of married life, which is a sublime experience which goes beyond all these. It is true that an ordinary wife will do all these, with the



satisfaction of contributing to the requirements of a family life. Yet, it should not be viewed by the husband as a means of cheap swindle, but as a partnership with sacred motives.

This partnership is one, which should go beyond the realms of ordinary partnerships. A wife is a partner who is more intimate than any other partner or friend; for they are joined to a level of intimacy and interaction, than cannot be practised by any other association. Friends come and go, partnerships also get made and unmade, but in the partnership that creates the family, there is a deeper aim that extends to the end of life.

So extend a little help to the wife in her daily chores, which are all more or less mundane jobs. In the absence of other entertaining events, these activities could make a person weary with monotony. If the husband could find time to enter into the kitchen on not so odd occasions, and join in the daily chores,



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bringing in the cheer and pleasantness of the dynamic outside world, then the wife could get electrified with a glow of dynamism.

Instead, it must be said, that many husbands treat their wife with the arrogance arising out of the misplaced understanding that she is out there to serve him and all the visitors of the house. It is customary for the husband to call out to the wife to attend to serving water and tea to his friends who might drop in with frequency. She would have to heed it, but then she might be engaged in so many other things, that might get interrupted by this action. An understanding husband can always do these things himself at times, when his wife is busy elsewhere.

**Marital peace:** One of the things that mark out a happy marriage is what is known as marital peace. There should be a mood of tranquillity, which pervades the atmosphere in a house where they live. This air of quiet gentleness is



one which can be felt the moment one moves into the presence of such couples. If this is there in any one's life, then their married life is a great success. As such, it should be the aim of all married persons to aim for it, as the one goal that could lead to the success of all other goals. For in such an atmosphere, a person can perform to his best, without negative thoughts disturbing him, and with unity in aim, which comes along with an understanding of requirements.

There are many things that could disturb the peace in a household. Each one of them requires precise analysis. The various issues, which lead to the inflaming of passions and temper, shall be dealt in detail in the succeeding chapters. In such cases, the theme that should be borne in mind is that all disputes should be within the parameters of a united family, wherein the husband and wife are one, and the outside world is different, and outside to their family. Nothing should be done or said



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that could break this sacred fabric.

If both of them start blaming each other for the general negativity that seems to pervade their lives, then it could be a one-way trip to disaster, a trip to parting and all the other complications that come with it that could add to the already existing problems. In these blaming, there could actually be a factual basis, on one side or on both. For the sake of their lives at least, there must be some introspection on this; instead of that, just retorting will only aggravate the unbearable-ness of the situation.

Need of introspection: The case of one person blaming the other has to be understood in different lights. This person may be in the habit of putting the burden of blame on another, or there might be a recurring issue that might be the cause of this daily outburst. Each person will have to bear a certain level of responsibility on this aspect. *The person who continually*



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*bursts out and the other who might be the cause of these outbursts!*

**Villain of the piece:** Yet, the person who brings in the havoc into the family could be the real culprit, and the person who bursts out, could be a helpless victim. Yet, the latter might easily get the reputation of being the villain of the piece.

**Being receptive to the confused messages:** In the case of the husband continually bursting into anger, the wife should seek to find out if there is anything that might be irritating him. Things that irritate a person are not easy to explain. Even to explain a seemingly simple emotional problem requires a lot of communication abilities, which most people don't have. It also requires the wife to be receptive to the confused manner in which it might come out. It may be seen that if every husband could explain in precise terms as to what is worrying or disturbing him, most of



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these unpleasant happenings would disappear. However, it is not an easy thing to achieve. For such things as inability to put the emotions in proper words, and the general sense of vulnerability that comes out along with it, disinclines a husband from doing it. Yet, it is the duty of the wife to sense it out and make him divulge his dark insecurities and inhibitions.

The strange compulsions: Another thing the wife should understand is that the man's world out there is different from the secluded world, she is used to. The things and themes on which men compete with each other are entirely different from what she can understand or perceive. Interacting with this world, a husband comes under strange compulsions, the magnitude and intricacies of which, the wife should try to understand. Even then in our social condition, where most women have no inkling of how men interact with each other in their absence, it may require a bit of intuition



on the part of the woman.

**The factor of food:** Now about the factor of food in a happy married life. Usually it is the wife who is in charge of this aspect. Remember that *the way to the man's heart is through the stomach*. One of the best things that a husband coming home after work would like to receive is good, tasty, wholesome food. It is one of the greatest pleasures a man can get at home from his wife, and if such a thing is forthcoming on a regular basis, then it needs to be said that he would consider it as one of his major achievements, in regard to his marriage. A wife who is capable of doing this will automatically get a lot of affection. For the tasty, stimulating food is something positive, and the wife will naturally be associated with something positive. At the same time, a casual, indifferent attitude to preparation of food could bring out the worst taste in food and could reflect the wife's attitude to her husband or to his comforts.



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Many women are good in cooking, but there are many who aren't. Especially women, who come from houses where the aspect of food was considered as insignificant, may find it difficult to bring out the flavour in food. Yet women, who want to make their family life a success, and endeavour to contribute to it constructively, should think about improving their culinary skills. In this modern world, in this age of information revolution, and far distance communication, so much knowledge from all over the country and the world are at hand for the seeker. Making use of this opportunity, a wife should improve her cooking variety and succeed in making dishes of attractive, if not exquisite, taste. It may be remembered that variety can whet the appetite. The same dish, and same flavour everyday, could be a real turn off for the appetite, even if the cooking is good, and the food rich in content.

The husband can also participate in cooking, for many men nowadays are expert cooks. Yet,



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it needs to be emphasised that their participation should be a help to the wife and not an addition to the problems. Some men just do the work by making their wives appendages and helpers, and the wives have to be available at their beck and call. So in effect, it doesn't help the wife in the real sense of the word. For if help is intended, it should be a real one of minimising the efforts of the wife. Not one, which will add on to it.

These types of occasional joint efforts could kindle a spirit of romance in the couple and also give them time to interact in talks of minor things, which are things that add spice to life.



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## What are the pressures in married life?

In our country, a marriage is not just between two individuals. It is a union of two families. At least, that is the way some persons, possibly with deep vested interests, tend to see things; and enforce on others. A man, who has till that date enjoyed the life of a bachelor, suddenly becomes a person with a particular stature in relation to a lot of people in both the families, and in the society. Along with this comes the, more or less, automatic change in his character.

The complexities: One of the first pressures that come into the life is the alignment to the new family, which will be an entirely new experience. But if after the marriage, the man is living far away from the spouse's family, then it need not be an intense experience. But if it is in a nearby area, then, definitely, there would be the effect of the new relations in all his actions, which might be benign or the opposite,



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depending on his luck. If it is a family in which the general living conditions, their behaviour, the standard of the dialect they use, the attitude of the brothers and sisters of the spouse, amiability or overbearing behaviour of the elders including the parents etc. are favourable to the husband, then there may not be much mental pressure to be felt on this count. Also, such minor things like the neighbours, their cultural standards etc. could have some effect on the husband, if he has to be a frequent visitor to this house, where he naturally may have to mix with the general crowd, even if he is not inclined to do so. And if he has to stay in his wife's house at infrequent intervals, then the space in the house, the number of other members staying in the house, and even the access to toilets, availability of modern amenities like water in tap etc. could have an impact on the tranquillity of the individual.

**At the wife's house:** The parents of the wife



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also could have an impact on this aspect, especially if they are of the interfering or advising type. Others that could have an influence are the brother's in law, their wives, the elderly servants who might have a more than ordinary informality or command inside the house, and also the neighbours who might have a sense of domination over the wife since her childhood, which they might attempt to extend over to her husband etc.

All these things are of not much consequence, if the man can take them in his stride or if he can maintain a sort of detachment from all these factors.

In the husband's house: In the case of the woman, the same aspects can be of more significance, especially if she is going to live with her in-laws, for it would be she who would have to bear the brunt of all these disturbing aspects, if they turn out to be of the negative type.



Though each one of these aspects can be discussed in detail, as a generalisation it may be said that the visible attachment a husband has to his wife can enable her to overcome these difficulties, daunt her possible tormentors and also afford her some amount of protection from the hurting words and agonising attitude of others, if it happens to be so.

But it must be emphasised here that the disturbing things, I have highlighted are not of a normal occurrence, for in most cases, the in-laws are very loving and affectionate. These types of antipathies are more common only in certain culture families, which are qualities, which have nothing to do with the financial condition of the families. And it could come in when there are acute differences in such things as culture, educational standards, financial status etc. between the newcomer and the family members.

The impending competition for stature: To



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continue with the basics; when a girl enters her husband's house, a lot of minor things might affect her stature. For in our language conditions, there are so many subtle things that go to make a lot of difference. For one thing, there might come in a problem of hierarchy. In the family, there might be other women, (and also men), who are sisters, sisters-in-law, brothers and brothers-in-law and various other persons of various categories. There comes an initial need to find one's level in regard to these persons. In certain cases, it might be an easy thing, with the easiest of scales, that is the scale of age, being used to put a person in her place. Also her husband's age is also a valuable tool for this. But in the modern world such a thing as age is increasingly becoming an obsolete tool, for other things like financial capacity, professional stature, social mobility, inherent intellectual acumen, depth in English etc. are more powerful aspects to a person's personality,



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than age. But inside the house, it need not be so. Or in the tussle for maintaining the status quo, it may be brushed aside, for each person would tend to take shelter in the scale, which is an advantage to oneself.

To put it frankly, if the others are not willing to acknowledge their inferiority and the new girl wants the superior position, then it could exist as a simmering undercurrent, as long as the husband and wife live in the joint family. And this is one of the reasons why our joint families in the modern times do have volatile interiors under the cloak of a seemingly calm exterior.

Another thing that could create problems is the perception of the husband's stature by the other members of the family. In the outside world, he might have a decent social status and mobility, of which the other members of his family may not be aware of, or unwilling to acknowledge; but the wife may be aware of this. In this case also, the wife might find it



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difficult to concede to the reflection of this mental attitude to her also, by the other members of the family; more so if she comes from a decent background.

Acceding to the regimentation: The best way to extricate from such situations would be to move into their own independent house. But in most cases, in the first few days of marriage itself, a certain level of positioning of persons takes place in the family, which is, more or less, based on the immediate force of personality of the persons involved. And, as a means of achieving family harmony, everyone concerned accedes to this regimentation, maybe under silent protest.

Aims: Now going beyond the basics, we can go into the realm of the real marital life of the couple concerned. It starts with the, and pertains to the understanding of what the aims of marriage are. Marriage is a social institution, which is not only a biological necessity, but



also one on which the very basis of society exists. It may be suggested that in certain modern societies, it has become a sort of obsolete institution. But on close scrutiny, it may be seen that what has replaced it as a sort of temporary phase of life, that is the *live-in together*, is also serving the same purposes, though with less restraints. In marriage, a person aims to find a lot of security; a sense of belonging, a sense of ownership; a lifetime companion for whom one need not have to continuously seek for; a partner in sex for whom one need not have to compete with others for; children of one's own genes; a family which exists as a separate and distinct unit in the society; with its own internal culture and behavioural peculiarities, where a person can practise his ideas of living and where he can relax and be at home.

**What they seek:** A man in addition seeks a woman who can cook his food, keep his house in order, get his clothes cleaned, give birth to



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his children, feed and look after them, and in certain cases, to look after his aged parents also. In the woman's case, she would be aiming for a person to bring in the family income, a father to her children, a person in whose name she can be known in the society and the world at large, a person who can provide her with the security that comes along with belonging to a man, and also a person who can look after her parents in their aged times.

Above all that they both yearn for a person in whom they can confide and be intimate with, and possibly someone who they can love deeply and feel respect for. This person should be someone on whom they can depend on with all their heart, intuition and sincerity. The whole essence of marriage is the things that are contained in these last few sentences. If these things are there, then there is an atmosphere of deep understanding between them, and the spirit of the marriage is positive.



If there is a streak of deceit, in the behaviour or in the interior of either of them, then this spirit is more or less dead or in a state of imminent atrophy. This aspect of deceit could spring from many other issues, which might act as pressure points. Such things as financial instability, lack of stature among others etc. could force a person to indulge in image building exercises, which may not be productive in the long run. Other than this, there would be an inherent disposition to tell lies, build up stories, indulge in acts of infidelity etc. all of which could lead to a situation where the other partner loses his or her faith in the other. This would be a grievous state of affairs, for then the atmosphere is one that is not at all conducive to a healthy married life.

Between the husband and wife, there should not even be an inkling of secrets. If there is anything that exists as a sort of undisclosed information between them, on a current issue, then it could poison all of their other thoughts



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and actions. It may be the starting point for an outsider to push a wedge between

Representing the spouse: One more thing needs to be emphasised here. That is, there is the need for each of them to represent the other. To put it in more candied terms, both the husband and the wife should be the representatives of their family. Not the representatives of their own fathers, or mothers, or uncles. In expression, demeanour, views, attitudes, interests, aims, and all other things, a wife should be seen as extruding the interests of her husband; and vice versa. Or at least, he or she should not radiate themes that are the antonym of the same. Trust me, if it is so, that shall be a rare level of positive energy in their lives, that shall really propel them to social, and financial heights.

As a continuation of this theme, let this also be stated. When a husband looks at his wife, what he should be able to see should be only his



wife; not her relatives who have strived to ride roughshod on him. Her face and thoughts of her, should not remind him of ugly events, ugly words, ugly persons, and many other themes that can bring disturbing thoughts to him. And in the case of the wife viewing the husband also, let it be the same.



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### What the husband requires

A demeanour of respect: Apart from these generalisations, we can now go into the specific issues that need to be addressed. Apart from love, what a husband would really like to see displayed is a demeanour of respect from his wife. In all actions on this part, this should be displayed with an earnestness that would be visible to a third person. A husband whose wife doesn't do this, or expresses a feeling of disgust of him, is a person who is mighty unlucky. It is an ill luck, which would follow him in all his social interactions, for the society at large, would be feasting on it. Especially, in Indian conditions, where the theme of respect is enacted in all social interactions, a husband should be extended this basic grace by his wife. If it is absent, for whatever cause, the marriage is in a state of decay, which if not remedied immediately, could lead to many miserable situations in the life of all the concerned persons, including the



children.

The first causality and the staying power: When the *going gets tough* for the man, and everywhere things are falling apart, the family is the last refuge. In our society, when a man goes under, respect is one of the first causalities. For a fallen man, there is no way he can get it back once he is down and without it, he would find it a wee bit difficult to get back to his levels. But a wife, who refuses to be affected by the negative vicissitudes of her husband's life, and continue to shower on him the qualities of respect, can be a real moral booster for the fallen man. And it is goes without saying that bad times are followed by good times, if there is enough fortitude in them to withstand the bruises. When times are good, the positive qualities of a wife may not seem significant, but when life gets real tough these qualities are the ones which by itself can bring in the staying power, and the daring to persevere.



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Appraisal by others: There are women who don't feel respect for their husband; sometimes due to the fact, that the man doesn't deserve it due to his depravity of moral standards; sometimes due to her own distorted vision of what the world is. The latter case is the most dangerous one for a quiet man who aims for a decent family life. The wife may be in a continual search for the opinion of other men about her husband. It is a fact of Indian social life that very few people acknowledge superior qualities in other men. And if the wife is seeking the appraisal of others about her husband and then behaves accordingly to her husband, then the situation is going to be very sorry. She may get praise about her husband from sycophants, but from others it may not be so forthcoming. And if it is sought from persons who her husband doesn't have regard for, then she can be assured that a positive response would be next to impossible.

The daily denigration: Such wives prove to be



a source of daily irritation in a man's life and interaction. She may not allow him to speak coherently; may frown, with curled up brows, at the content of his speech, which she may judge to be uninformed; may make disparaging remarks at him, all in the presence of third persons; may mimic him with mockery, in front of the children; may inform the children that he is a crook or a fool; etc. She may go on to the extent of asking other men their opinion of her husband, all of which, could be extremely discouraging things for her husband. Especially if these persons are of lower intellectual acumen than her husband. All these actions can sound the death knell of a contented married life. In this aspect what all such women should bear in mind is that in this wide world, nobody is acknowledged by another to be better than himself in any personal qualities. The basic sense of insecurity in many persons forces them to place another person in a lesser light than



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himself. But these need not deter a person from being what he is or from what he wants to perform in life.

The essential subordination of the wife: In many of the Indian languages, the terms used for *you*, *she*, *he* etc. for the wife are the *what may be described as the disrespectful form*, or maybe one can say, the more *intimate* form. And the wife has to consistently use the respectful form in regard to the husband. It is a problem of the Indian languages and nothing can be done about it at an individual level. This does not demean the wife nor is it intended to have such effect, and the society won't see anything derogatory about it. But in the modern times, when many of us have got used to the English ways of communication, many women once they get married do have a problem when they have to go into a role of subordination, in marriage, where what they aimed at was a relationship of equality. Many would accept this secondary position without any qualms, as



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something, which is invariably connected with marriage. But, some others may try to find a way out of this quandary, by devising ways to go around it.

In many of our vernacular languages, there is a problem of how to address the husband. If the language of communication between them were English, then calling him by first name would be ideal, and could be a confirmation of their intimacy. But if the same thing is done in some of our languages, it could mean a stark example of irreverence and insult.

A source of strain and discomfort: But between spouses, who are used to the more liberal usage, the wife could use the first name for addressing her husband, in the place of such usage as *you, he* and for calling him (in the vernacular). But some wives who have lived in areas where they had not practised their vernacular, and when they come home, and marry a local man, may even go to the extend



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of using the lower terms of *you*, in the same manner her husband addresses her. This is not good. In fact it is very bad. In vernaculars, using the intimate terms of addressing that a husband uses to the wife, if used in the wrong direction, that is, if the wife uses to the husband, won't signify equality. Instead it would only mean insult. The society would only see it as such. Maybe, between the husband and the wife, there won't be any problems, but in the midst of other men, the husband may get an awkward feeling of inadequacy. And slowly, it may reflect in his social behaviour, when he would start keeping his wife and house away from the circle of his more significant friends. In other words, his wife would be a strain for him, and not a source of comfort.

**Delaying an inescapable separation:** In the context of all the things discussed above, it has to be added that immediately after marriage, if either of the two find that this is a relation, which is not suitable to himself or herself, and



there is no correlation in the various factors that creates affinity between themselves, then it is always better in the long run, to dissolve the relationship before it is too late. It could save a lot of pain and agony, which might come in with a separation after a long stay together, which might also include a lot of acrimonious remarks about each other being made public.

**Fidelity and infidelity:** One of the main pressures in married life is that of financial security. In fact it is so in all types of living, and in almost all persons. Apart from that is the question of fidelity. It is a matter that, if not addressed, and answered adequately, could poison the whole life of both partners in the marriage. It all depends on the persons concerned. But taken in a larger context, an apprehension on this count is there in all married persons to a limited extent, especially if they are committed to the continuance of the relationship. To a limited extent, it could be



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considered as a healthy sign. In its absolute absence, it might point to a sort of frozen mind in regard to what the spouse is doing. And an absolute callous attitude of what is going to happen in regard to the marriage.

Insecurity and its foundations: A slight level of insecurity is there in almost all individuals with regard to how far the relationship would continue, in the face of the onslaughts of destiny. Building up a relationship of intimacy is a long and arduous thing, and in time it is a possession, which becomes equal to one's own self. In certain conditions, or when fate brings about unusual incidents in one's life, or even in the presence of some persons, these insignificant levels of insecurity could get inflamed. But in many cases, it is not actually a case of apprehension about infidelity or about losing one's spouse or a suspicion that he or she is having a nice time with the other that causes a feeling, which might easily be mistaken for suspicion. For it could just be a



manifestation of a general feeling of inadequacy in the person himself or herself. Or it could be a reflection of a dislike of a person, with whom the other partner's interaction is not liked by this individual. Or it could be due to an understanding of the inimical or substandard nature of the other person. Or just a general discomfort with the general social settings, that may have shackled him or her, and given freedom to certain others.

**Managing insecure feelings:** To ward off these types of irritations in life, both the partners should understand the general vulnerability of both of them, to mental agony and psychological insecurities. There should be an understanding that both of them should take effort to relieve the other's agony, if any is in existence. In most cases, an offensive talk of suggestion that the other has violated norms in any levels of behaviour is just a question, which is yearning a consoling answer. But in most cases, the other partner's reaction is a



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retort of outburst. This reaction just doesn't serve any purpose, and could only aggravate the situation. For in such cases, the first person's accusation would be that the second person is always reacting violently whenever the third person's name is alluded to. Actually here what is most evident is a lack of communication, between the partners. For, the first person is only aiming to establish the fact that there is unison of both souls between themselves, in which whatever one person is seeking to know about the other should be known immediately.

This type of situation can be diffused, if the second person immediately informs the first that there is nothing of the sort suggested, in a light-hearted manner, bringing the theme of suspicion into the open, without a hint of ridiculousness; and handle it as a normal human reaction. Actually it would be a very healthy thing for all spouses to discuss the theme of suspicion, and deal with it, and set



out clear ways to handle it, in case one of them is having a feeling of anxiety and of rejection. In this sort of discussion, pain should be taken to handle it as a serious and pertinent issue of marriage, something that would crop up in most partnerships. For even in business partnerships, suspicion is abundant.

Warding off irritations and following certain codes: In many cases, what irritates a spouse is not the belief that the partner is unfaithful, or that he or she is being intimate to another person, but just the fact that the third person is getting the impression that he or she is being intimate, or is in a position to dominate the spouse. As a factor, which brings in peace into the mind of a spouse, it is the duty of the other partner to heed the feeling of a partner in this regard; and to decide to follow certain codes of restrained communication with certain persons whom the spouse doesn't feel a liking for.

In the case of a man, another man who is not



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very polite or pleasant to him, being in a very jovial friendship to his wife, wouldn't be a matter that could give peaceful thoughts. In fact, it would be seen by him as rank infidelity. And when it comes to be mentioned, what might come out might be mistaken as a suspicion of a love affair or some other equally disturbing intrigues. But what the husband has in mind and what comes out will be entirely different from each other. And the precise distinction between the issues may not be clearly defined even in the husband's mind. Only thing that he would know would be that the sight or thought of the other man is driving him mad.

The exasperating scenarios: Another level of interaction that some men won't like is the highly social interaction the wife is having with persons with whom he can't mix with, such as persons who are his social inferiors or superiors, as reflected in the social hierarchy. Ordinary interactions won't be the cause of



irritation. But when he discerns a possibility that the other person is dominating in such interactions, he would find it highly annoying that his wife is being friendly to such persons who are entering into a level of equality or domination with his wife, for he would perceive it as his wife bringing him also to such levels. Now, an admonition on this account would only demean him in the eyes of his wife. At the same time, she will definitely understand it as some sort of suspicion on the husband's part, which in itself would be beyond her capacity to bear. Her immediate reactions would be that she has been insulted by insinuations of such horrible nonsense. In all such occasions, the husband would be at a loss to make the wife understand what is disturbing him.

Dealing with false demeanours and personalities: A related problem is when he finds his wife being overly friendly with persons of doubtful intentions. For, in many cases these persons would rejoice in describing their



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fantasized conquests over a married woman in many unseemly occasions and among indecent company. As a man, the husband would not only be aware of such happenings, for sometimes he himself would have participated in such lewd talk in mean company, or would be aware of such behaviour among irresponsible men, but also would not be able to endure the thought of such person using his wife's name in such contexts. Also alluding to her in lower words of *She, Her* etc.

However, since many women still live in the safe seclusion of cultured atmospheres, they may not be able to contemplate such behaviour in persons, they casually know and who they believe to be of cultured etiquette. The poor husband may find it difficult to explain his apprehensions to her, and even if he does, he may end up making a sorry figure of himself, by stooping to the level of making base accusations about seemingly decent



men. It would cause much mental pain to him that he had to bring up the topic of these persons in his family discussion, and that would also cause him to get more agitated. It may help if the wife understands the undercurrents in the issue. But in most cases, the wife would be of painfully insufficient experience in this matter.

**Wife's special confident:** In certain cases, the wife may have a male person, who has been a sort of confident for her in all issues, since pre-marriage days. She may continue with this connection, and would not find anything awkward in this, as there is nothing clandestine in their relations and nothing suggestive of an affair or affection is in existence between them. But, this could give a husband sleepless nights and weary days.

For, the husband would like the role of a confident to be his own prerogative, and would not like this right to be shared with anyone,



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whatever his relationship to his wife. For in many cases, this person could be some member of the wife's family, including her uncles or cousin, even of very senior age. A reaction of dislike to this assignment of a role of an informal consultant by his wife to someone need not be understood by the wife as something implying suspicion of infidelity or some uncommon relationship.

**Husband as an appendage:** And it need to be added that it is better if the wife did not have male or even female friends who are very intimate, to the extent that they know her affairs better than her husband. For, then her husband is reduced to the level of an appendage. And it should be understood that he has to compete with other men in this wide world on many issues. And another man knowing his intimate family secrets and issues with a rare level of familiarity could have a very damping effect on his self-confidence and levels of social communications. And



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sometimes these persons could metamorphose into a sort of a third person in the family, which in the long run will turn out to be a nuisance to the general amity in the family. In years to come, it may be disturbing to the growing children, who may not be willing to endure the presence of an unofficial third authority in the family.

A social scene at home: There are women who have a lot of social friends, both male and female. And the husband would not find anything disturbing about it in itself. But if they become a sort of nuisance to his home life, then it could be another proposition. Some women, especially those who have a bit of dominating nature, have a habit of bringing her friends home, and allowing them a lot of freedom. Whenever the husband comes home, he would find these outsiders inside his house, maybe only in the front veranda or in the sitting room. He would be forced to open up a conversation and built up a sort of



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acquaintance with these persons, who may not be his category of persons, with whom he would like to be identified with.

The problem is that in such a family environment, he would not get the freedom that one is supposed to get at home. It would be just like being in the social environment. And the problem could be worse if the wife is in the habit of opening up intimate family subjects to these persons, who may in turn bother the husband with some query, which might force him to be on the defensive. The problem is definitely troublesome if the wife is financially independent or if the husband is financially weaker than his wife, and she has an attitude of not caring for the views of the husband in this regard and is indifferent to his demands that his house is a place for privacy.



The spiritual potency in loyalty and the looming disasters in disloyalty: All wives must understand that a very understanding and loyal wife is the best thing a man can have, when he is on the battlefield of everyday life. The sense of security and calmness that this loyal figure can bring in a man's mind is unimaginable and possibly incomprehensible to persons who have not experienced such blissful feelings. For a man to succeed in life, this is one of the best ingredients that can come his way. But a wife, who is not loyal or is unfaithful or is not earnest in her attitude of affection to him, can be a source of disaster for him. For, the mental tension and the deep agony this personage can afflict on him is also unimaginable. And this can hurt him in almost all of his social and professional interaction, and can lead him to the path of assured disaster.

Weird misgivings from afar: In the present times, there are plenty of men working in places, far away from their home, either



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abroad, or just in distant places in our own country, from where they are not able to come home regularly. The thought of an affectionate wife waiting for him, to hear of his good tidings, and ever compassionate to his setbacks, is the sublime spirit that leads him on, even when the whole world around him is crumbling and the future looks absolutely bleak. But if he has to hear some news that puts his faith in his wife in doubt or if he is disturbed by something that is in the environment, in which his wife is living, then the severe distress and mental torture, he has to undergo is not easy to put into words. One of the main things that could disturb a man is the knowledge that in his absence, his wife is on very intimate terms with another man.

In this regard, there is a bit of a secret that no man would willingly divulge. That is, if the wife doesn't like a man and says he is unbearable, then her husband is more at ease, when this man is interacting with his wife. But if the wife



thinks that another person is likeable and admirable and likes to interact with him, then in certain cases, the husband may have misgivings. In other words, he likes men who are not likeable to his wife. It may be said that this strange trait in a man's thinking is not usually discernable in ordinary circumstances. But in some strange environments, when the other man is very soft and polite and affable to his wife and seems to get on well with her, then this trait may manifest itself. But when the husband is living with the wife, it may not be a big issue. For, there may be many persons with whom both of them might be interacting with.

**The damsel in distress:** But when the husband is away for long and the other men, with all good intentions, start being a sort of helping persons to his wife that she starts depending on certain persons for each and everything, then it might cause deep concern in the husband's highly vulnerable mind. And if such



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helping attitude leads to that person having continual access to the house for social talk, then it would seem to the husband that he is on the brink.

If the wife is of a character, which is used to such social interaction and is of some level of stature, then it might be okay. However if she is a kind who can be prevailed upon, then it is not at all an advisable situation. For, her husband might not like the thought that she is being dominated by another man and that too in his absence. Moreover, he might imagine weird scenarios, of some sort of terrible liaison between his wife and the other man. In this regard, all wives must understand the deep psychology that runs in these types of situations. And strive to see that they do not create any occasion for such agony for the husband. And if she does sense that he is under any such misgivings, then she should immediately take steps to dispel such doubts from his mind.



It would be a mistake to enjoy the feeling that he is jealous, or that '*let him have some pain*', as it will create more attachment. If he is not putting his fears into words, then she should, herself, take the initiative and bring up the subject, either through letters or through some other means of communications and see that he understands the real facts. If that is done, instead of his failing in his efforts, he would be able to put in more sincerity to his work, for he exists for her and the children.

An unfair comparison: The wife, in her premarital days, may have had a lover or a sweetheart, with whom she may or may not have had an affair. Many men don't care about such affairs, for it is understood to be the effects of growing up. But it need not be the case with all couples. Especially if the wife is still having enduring soft feelings for her old beau, and is continually comparing her husband with the various aspects of that person, then it definitely is a problem for the



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marital life. And it certainly is an unfair action on the part of the wife. And if she goes to the extent of maintaining communication with him, then she is being not only unfair, but also grossly crossing the limits of propriety. Even if there are no more feelings of the heart involved, if the husband doesn't like the continuing connection, then it would only be correct to immediately curtail the communications. If the other person insists on continuing, then he is being unfair to both of them.

The tragic indifference: In all these matters, a very congenial atmosphere of absolute communication between the spouses could lead to better understanding of the predicament, the husband is facing. The wife should show earnestness in trying to decipher what the husband is trying to convey. In the long run, this very earnestness will bestow a soothing action on the husband's mind and will have a very benign effect on the whole married



life. For, otherwise what will be reflected would be a marked indifference to the husband's feelings, which would strangle all bliss out of a married life. At the same time, what has been delineated here, in many cases, may be an extreme case; and in the case of many husbands, they may not react in the ways described. But these things may be understood to get a clear idea as to what ticks a husband.

Wife's relatives as a boon or bane: A wife's overwhelming attachment to her family could also be disconcerting to a husband. It is true that any person could have a deep affection for their parents and kith and kin. But an understanding that after marriage, both persons, the husband and wife, have entered into a holy union, which is supreme in comparison to all other attachments and affections, is an absolute requisite. In terms of significance; this union exceeds any other partnership or bonding, both of them has ever had the occasion to experience, in



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significance.

The vicious comparisons: An attitude of always comparing her husband with her family members could have negative effects. Especially if it is an unfavourable comparison. And then, declaring that the husband is being too sensitive or that his repulsion to such attitudes are a reflection of his inferiority complex, could only add insult to injury. In no way should a wife seek to find out how a particular issue would have been handled by her father or her brothers or even by her mother or sisters. For one thing, they are not relevant. For, even if the husband's actions speak of inexperience or lack of capacity, it is not expected, nor acceptable that other men should come and do it for him. As a person, in charge of a family, it is his duty to run the things as per his capacity. And if he wishes to get others help and suggestions, well then, it can be had. But he is not under any compulsion to accept anyone's monitoring in



his actions. And if the wife does put him under pressure to bring her family members' opinion on all family decisions, then he could have an uncomfortable feeling of being held on a leash. And his actions may reflect an immediate need to get out of this stranglehold, and could end up in more unintelligent actions, with consequent effects. The wife will definitely have a moral responsibility in these negative effects, even though she may not acknowledge it. Moreover the husband would be loosing many valuable insights into the various aspects of practical living, which in later years may come in very handy.

**Being second in precedence:** Another aspect of this issue is that of the wife displaying too much affection for her kin and kith, which might obviously be on a higher scale than what she exhibits towards her husband. To put it more clearly, if a husband feels that he is only second in the line of affections, and that her first attachment is to her parents, could in



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certain cases be a sensitive spot. If, in all things that are decided about the family, the wife consistently insists on taking decisions only in accordance with the interests of her family, then it could lead the husband to get a feeling of insignificance and irrelevance. For example, the husband wants to shift his family to a new place, so that many of his social and professional needs can be attended to, with much ease. But if the wife insists that it cannot be done, solely because her parents may not like it, or that she wants to be near them, or that they insist that their daughter should be near to them etc. could be highly disturbing to the husband. It could be more so, if the husband comes to get a feeling that this sort of attitude is continuously interfering with his right to decide what is good for him and his family. The example given should not be confused with the issue of the wife's parents being physically unfit to live without support, which is a different issue altogether.



The intruding relatives: In some cases, the frequent visits of the wife's family to seek out the welfare of their daughter could annoy the husband. But, as should be said in the case of all the aspects discussed in this book, there is always a positive side to all this. But in the case of a good husband, it might disturb him, if the visitors disturb the general atmosphere and culture, he is trying to induce in his house. This problem is more acute, if the wife's family comes from a different cultural background, which the husband might perceive as a corrupting influence on the culture, he is aim to bring into his family. And if they start interfering in his family affairs, and also starts associating with his associates and professional acquaintances, in some cases there might be problems. For, it may be understood that all human relationships in our nation are deliberately designed, with purposeful planning. Stark outsiders intruding into these tightly designed areas can be really unsettling.



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Again all these things, depends on the persons involved. For in some cases, it may happen that the husband likes the presence of his wife's relations at all times due to some sort of affinity for them. Then these problems are just in the realm of imagination.

**The retorting wives:** Then there are wives who talk too much. It is not that the wife should not talk, for communication is the essence of a good family life, and there should be the continual din and bustle of laughter and humour for a house to come alive. But if the speech of the wife amounts to retorting, snapping, sharp reactions, loud arguments on everything, twisting of the brows, along with such obnoxious gestures like using the forefinger in a form of admonition etc. could perturb the husband, no end.

Then there are spouses who, the moment the husband comes home, start nagging him with a series of problems, which might range from



financial problems, the fever of the child and the un-repaired kitchen gadget to the problem of the incessant failure of the husband in many or all of his schemes. They could put on a pout or could complain in nasty terms, or expressions. In this context, all wives should understand that a pouting or nagging wife is the last thing, a husband needs, after he comes home from the struggles of the day. When he comes home, he needs to feel at home, and not in a torture chamber, with a schedule of persistent questioning to be faced.

**Financial duplicity:** Another pressure a husband has to face is the problem of a lack of financial liquidity. It is a very delicate issue and if it crops up in the early days of married life, then it could be a thing, which many husbands would like to hide from their spouses. But it may not be a wise decision in the long run. And in this case, all women should bear in mind that it is a highly possible thing that their husband may have problems of finance at one



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time or other. And in this case, they should not put up an expression that if this is the case, then they have been swindled or that they have been the victims of some fraud. For, once married, and willing to continue in the relation, then the duty of both the partners in the married life is to seek ways to tide over these problems. If the wife is kept in a level of glorious ignorance of what is what, then it could only be just delaying the pain, and when it comes, it could come as an avalanche.

Another problem would be the necessity of dancing to her tune, whenever she demands this thing and that thing which may be expensive and beyond the poor husband's present capacity. Yet, when faced with the prospect of the halo breaking, the husband may manage to get the expensive items, for her. But the chances of him getting into the stranglehold of moneylenders and other usurers are really great. And when it comes to the time of reckoning it may be too late, and



then the blame for acting out a false drama would again fall on the husband. So, in the long run it is good that the husband faces the relatively slight pain of revealing his financial difficulties to his wife. And let her have an initial discomfiture than an enduring source of distress.

When the path turns daunting: When the times are tough, and the going gets tougher, the wife needs to adjust to it, and take upon herself the duty to see that there is no wanton wastage of money, resources or time. It is not a time to think of shame or hurt, but to put the best foot forward and plan for a better future. Instead of that, if the wife continues to indulge in juvenile immaturity, and pesters her husband for the glory of fineries and expensive conveniences, then it could be inviting disaster.

Psychological affects connected to a sick social communication system: We live in a country, divided by extreme social hierarchies,



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which is reflected in, and also amplified by our languages. We have the concept of respect and disrespect, whereas in English, they are conspicuous by their absence. A man, who might be a husband and a father, once he is outside his house and interacting with the world, at various levels as master, supervisor, attendant, worker etc. and dealing with superiors and inferiors, is required to exhibit respect to his seniors and extract respect from his juniors. In certain cases, where the stature of the person cannot be measured immediately, he may have to maintain a stance of monitoring to see if he is in an advantageous position or if he has to go under. These issues do interfere with the general liberty of the wife also.

For, no man would like his wife to mix with persons below his standing, at a level of equality. For, for each level of equality, the higher level is one to be shown feudal respect. And a sort of herd instinct would grasp all



members of a level, that they generally exhibit a similar understanding of the hierarchy. And all the member of the higher strata would look upon all members of the lower group as a whole with the same level of social existence. The husband who exists at a higher level may not like his wife, who is his equal, to drag him to a lower level, by her informal interaction with his perceived inferiors. Some person's like their wife to have stature, especially persons who are moving in a liberated manner, with lot mobility. At the same time, persons who are living in situations where they find it difficult to exhibit their own mental potential, would not like their wife to assume more stature than themselves, as it might come in competition with their own stature, at least in the eyes of third persons who might enjoy making comparatives studies in a most obvious manner.

Apart from this, the husband who might have to exhibit exquisite obsequiousness to his



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social superiors may not enjoy his wife being a continuous witness to actions, which are demeaning to himself. And hence, he may not enjoy his wife interacting with many of his seniors, other than on special occasions. This aspect is mainly in areas where the vernacular is more prevalent as against in organisations where English is the mode of communication, where this conditioning may not be much evident.

To put it in other words, a man would like to bring his wife only into social circles, only where he is at ease. Wherever he is at a loss, or feels stifled, he would not like his wife to appear, for he is a person to whom the wife has to show consistent respect. But this is a factor on which a man cannot do much about, as in this country of ours, where many men have to struggle to make ends meet, there may not be much choice or alternative to situations where a man has to endure a lower profile in the presence of others. In this aspect, he may



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or may not have mental uneasiness, and may say things, which would seem to be the curtailing of the freedom of the wife. Yet, a small amount of understanding of this issue by the wife could help. And if the man or woman can communicate to each other about the various aspects of this issue, it might help.

But, the problem is that most people won't be in a position to understand these issues in their finer aspects, let alone talk about it. The only thing, they might understand is that there are times when they are uneasy about certain actions of their wives. To explain why, would be beyond their capacity.

The irritants: One of the major irritants that happen is when the wife is unable to discern the fact that her husband is preoccupied with something in his mind. These moments of deep contemplation would be understood by the wife as times of lazing. What he might be doing might be thinking of some serious



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problems, concerning business or pressing social engagements, and ways to extricate himself from positions of loss or distress. At the same time, the wife may consider these moments as opportunities to charge him with many negligence, imagined and real. Another thing that can become an irritant is the asking her husband to do some minor thing, when he is going for a very serious and significant thing. In his preoccupation with the more serious affair, he might either forget to do the other item, or may do it with a level of inefficiency. In both these cases, the result might be heated words, with the wife accusing him of inadequacies. In these things, a little understanding by the wife about her husband's mental worries, and how he functions could help a lot.

Some wives cause disturbances, with sharp tongue, to their busy and preoccupied husbands with such things as minor as of having not kept the newspaper in the proper



place, the taken out shirt back in the hanger, and such other things. It may be true that there may be a streak of such clumsiness in the man, but these things come with a person, and if cannot be rectified, the atmosphere need not be worsened with a snapping tongue.

**The suspicious:** Then there are the suspicious types of wives. They may or may not have cause to be suspicious about their husband with regard to many things, mainly in regard to their relationship with other woman. It is a terrible thing if they have to come to such a level. It, more or less, signifies the absence of mutual trust. And to build up trust, is not easy. The only way is to deliberately take steps to improve communication on such subjects that would even encompass the issue of suspicion.

**Those who stoop:** Yet, beyond that what I would like to say about is the issue of some stooping to the level of asking their servants and other dependants to spy on the actions of



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her husband. These persons may really enjoy their assignment to the extent of causing consternation to the husband. And it is a sad day when the wife has to depend on another person to know the news about her husband.

It is not possible to go into the merits of such issues in a generalised manner. For there may be requirements, in severe cases, and it may not be good for the wife to be caught unawares. But always remember, that there is a danger when outsiders, like servants, dependants, husband's business partners, people whom the husband consider as inferior to him etc. are given the authority, to spy on him, and the access to her, to report it. Many of these people are themselves not of such ethical and mental standards to do the job, with dignity. And many more would exploit the situation for their own benefit; and some may even enjoy putting a wedge between the husband and wife. Some may use this as a means to take advantage of the husband, so



that he may get distracted and may make mistakes in business and accounts.

Approaches in regard to bringing up children:  
In regard to children also, there are many fine aspects, which can cause happiness and also bring in gloom. In the many aspects of children, there are many things that can cause concern in the mind of husbands, with regard to the actions and attitude of their wives. This is more in the case of men who are very concerned with how their children should be brought up. And if they find a streak of difference in the views of their wife about this, then in it itself they would have cause to get aggrieved. But if a particular policy has been formulated among the husband and wife about how to treat and look after the children, and then he finds that she is flouting all this, the moment his back is turned, could cause major upheavals.

He may not like his children treated brutally, by



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their mother, whenever they do any mischief, or use ugly words to admonish them. Or he may need the children to be kept in terrible discipline and regimentation. He may try to bring in a modern culture in their life, which the wife may not be able to provide. He may need his children to move with a select, sophisticated group; or he may like his children to move with the common children. He may like to have English language to be a sort of alternative language in the home, so as to induce it in the communication of the children. Or he may like his native vernacular to be the language at home, and may have an antipathy for English; at the same time, the wife may be having just the opposite ideas. He may or may not like the idea of his parents or the parents of his wife's family influencing his children and inducing their culture in them.

Another thing that might hurt a father is, if he has to compete with others, such as his children's uncles and aunt, for the children's



affection. Whenever he comes home, and wants to pet and pamper his children, if he finds that they are more willing to be in the lap or company of such other persons, and refuse to come to him. Then it will definitely be distressing. And if these other persons enjoy his discomfiture, and encourage the continuation of such behaviour in the children, then it may cause unpleasant situations. And if his wife also, doesn't care for his feelings, then it may be a very sad thing.

Apart from all this, since the wife is the person who is more in contact and communication with the children, if there were any character of delinquency in the children, he would like to put the entire blame on his wife. The entire aspect of children has to be discussed in detail. But at the moment, in this context, it may be said that both the husband and wife should take an active interest in the affairs of the children and also arrive at mutually acceptable ideas on this count.



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And it remains the supreme duty of the wife to instil in the children a healthy love, affection and respect for their father. If she fails in this duty, it reflects her own dissatisfaction with her spouse. Or it may reflect a real callousness in her attitude to married life.



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## The experience of the wife

In many ways, the requirements of the wife are just a reflection of the needs of the husband, and in many ways, they are not. In our social conditions, a wife is not accepted as an equal partner, as understood in the English context (there also, there are peculiarities to their levels of equality, but they are of a different context). Though, depending on the intellectual acumen and also the cultural differences, there are slight differences in the marital experience of the Indian married women.

But taken on an average, women have more strenuous situations to face once married. For, the general concept is that, a girl is married to a house. And in a way that it means that she is lost to her ancestral house and is a part of the husband's household. And in more ways than that that happens for her husband with regard to her parents, her spouse's parents come to be in the position of her parents. And with it



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comes the inevitable necessity to acquire likeable and decent parents-in-law.

The great uncertainty: This is one of the greatest uncertainties that bother a girl on the eve of her marriage. For, she is expected to be secondary, not only to her husband, but also may be in a minor position in reference to many others in the new house. And generally they are only willing and happy to be so. Only thing is that the general environment should be of affection, decency and understanding.

In our country, most of the girls do have an inherent mental conditioning to the requirements that one need to do in a husband's house. But at the same time, it is also true that many do not like this faceless state to which they are fated to endure. This is reflected in the desire of girls to go in for higher education and try to get into professions like medical practice, engineering, management, fashion designing etc. But only few can get



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through. So it may safely be concluded that all women do like to live a life of more dynamism than that offered by the interior of a kitchen or household. This is an understanding all the modern husbands should bear in mind and that there is nothing wrong in that.

The conceding: limits and parameters: The sublime feeling in the husband's mind should be that another human being with all comparable emotions and vulnerabilities associated with them, such as love, delight, distress, ecstasy, fatigue etc. has joined him in his effort to cross the mighty, turbulent ocean that is life. And an attitude of concern for whatever his wife has to undergo and bear in all her life and work has to be there. There should be an understanding on the part of the husband that the lady who has entered his life is his wife and not a servant for his parents and other members of his family, who might even include his maternal or paternal uncles and aunts. This does not mean that the wife should



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not do any of the work required for them, only there should not be an attitude of being taken for granted. And that too, with the silent approval of the husband. And if there is any inimical attitude to his wife from the other members of the family, then it is his duty to see that such things are discouraged at once.

At the same time, it is not advisable for the wife to maintain a posture of offence to the other members of the household, whose culture, behaviour, language dialect, postures, gestures, domination etc. she may not be able to tolerate. For, once she has *crossed the Rubicon*, then it is in her interest, to get on with a level of participation and enjoyment in all the affairs of the husband's family. Especially, if she is living with her in-laws.

It is her duty to see to the welfare of her husband, but at the same time if it is her husband's will that she look after the welfare of her in-laws also, she has to do it. A level of



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amiability with them and other members of the family should be build up. It is true that there are many things that exist as an undercurrent in our entire social environment, which will create tensions among persons living in large families (it is not within the purview of this book to go into those things). And if those things seem insurmountable, then she may tell her husband to move into a new place of residence. But within her husband's house, it is better if she strives to achieve a peaceful atmosphere, otherwise, the atmosphere would be unbearable. But in most cases, the in-laws will be nice and helpful to their daughter-in-law. But, then it may not be the general case, and for all daughter-in-laws. Again it may be understood that the fault may not necessarily be theirs. The starting point of inflamed passions could be anyone. And nobody may necessarily be dubbed a villain, for each person may be acting from his or her own levels of compulsions.



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The etiquette involved in dealing with in-laws need to be discussed in more elaborate details. And can be dealt with later.

There are many ways a husband can make life much easier for a wife. The first and foremost is by loving her, with deep attachment. And by loving their children. And by being a very responsible husband.

One of the important duties of the husband is to bring in income by doing work or some enterprise, which are legal. This may be a factor which can have times of plenty and also time of limitations, but if the husband is doing all that he can to arrange for the regular flow of income, then there is nothing more to be said about it. And some husbands may like their wives to participate in doing the homework of businesses, by taking care of the accounts, and doing a part of the managing of resources.

Gathering respect: There should be a very evident attitude of respect to the wife, not only



when they are alone together, but also in the presence of others. There should be an attitude that her opinion is to be reckoned, in all major decisions concerning the family and business. In a way, outsiders should get a feeling that the wife is also, an intelligent being, who is a source of strength to her husband. There are men who take pain to let others know that their wives are of no use than doing the kitchen work, and once this is the attitude, he has conditioned in everybody, including his wife, then she will be more or less fit only for that. For, others will also take the cue from him, and treat her likewise. It may not be a major problem for him, and may even give him the sense of achieving a goal in having someone to attend to his menial jobs, without question.

However in the long run, when time goes on, and children all grow up and move away and old friends have disappeared, then he will find that, while others have intelligent companions



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in their wives, he only has a servant in his wife. Moreover, when he is physically unfit, even for a short period of time, there won't be anyone to manage things efficiently and whoever takes over for a short period, may ultimately be seen to have an ulterior motive. He will then find, with deep regret, that whatever opportunity he had to build up in his wife, the efficiency to be a manager of own assets, has been wasted, while there would be ample examples of other women taking care of family, assets, children and the interests of their husbands with competence acquired with experience. Where the wives of his friends would be moving with ease in elegant social circles, his own wife will have the mentality of obsequiousness and servitude, even though endowed with enough and more wealth.

It may be seen that persons who are taken into account show their bearing in each and every one of their postures, and their stature will also be of that level. This applies to women also.



For men of individuality, a wife with stature is a nice adornment.

The mystifying transformations: Yet, there is a reality that I need to say, possibly with a certain level of regret. At times, men of great mental stature chance to marry women from very low cultural standards. The husbands then strive to induce refinement into their wives. At times, they may learn to regret it. For, persons who have lived lives in subdued postures once allowed a chance to develop their real personalities, turnout to be entities exactly different from their subdued individuality. Here the mistake lies in not choosing a wife with a properly developed cultural personality. For, it needs to be stated that it is better to marry a wife of required cultural and intellectual qualities, than to marry a person of subdued and unclear inner quality and then train her to one's requirements. Many men have done this and lived to regret it. For, subdued persons also have strong personality



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tendencies, which exhibit itself with full force only once they have been given the chance to develop. And what then comes out is anybody's guess.

**Socialising with the uncouth:** One of the things that can cause deep concern in a wife who comes from cultured background is the socialising habit of her husband with persons, and groups of persons, who are considered to be of an unruly kind. In many cases, she may not be able to react to this, for these persons may slowly become the constant companions of her husband, and may be regular visitors to their home. There may be drinking parties, at home and outside. This theme is one that should be discussed in detail.

**The art of imbibing a poison:** In our country, as in many other things, people at large have not been able to get trained or cultivate themselves with the ways of sophisticated drinking of alcohol. Chemically, all alcohols



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are poisons. And ethyl alcohol, the one that we use for drinking purpose is also a poison. But if taken in minor quantities, it will induce a feeling of intoxication and the poisonous effect will not affect them, as the liver will take care of neutralising it. In minor quantities, this feeling of intoxication is not a bad thing, and may even be said to have beneficial effects. But the problem with the vast majority of the natives here, is that for them drinking in large quantities is a sort of measure of some form of manliness. It is believed that the capacity for heavy drinking indicates some sort of vitality, which in most cases is not evident in other aspects. Indulging in this sort of habits could have a lot of negative effects.

One is that it is a drain on the purse. Second is that it will have devastating effects on the various organs of the body, which may manifest only after some time. Third is that the personality of a drunkard suffers so much that it is very obvious that there is something odd



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about him. Fourth is that he gains a notoriety of a drunkard, which by itself will limit his effectiveness in many social activities of a higher kind. What is available to him would be the sort where decent men would only participate from at a distance. Fifth is that he would not be able to choose his companions as other intelligent men do, but would be having as companions all persons who have an irresistible urge to imbibe alcohol beyond reasonable limits. In this last aspect, it may be noted that in our country, where there is the limitations imposed by the problem of respect to communication, drinking liquor together is generally used as shortcut to break this barrier. But it, in most cases as usually happens with all shortcuts, ends up by embedding a person in the wrong society, where men who are laggards in many of their responsibilities join together.

Now coming back to the context, a wife from a decent background may not like the presence



of men coming into the house and drinking to their limits, and beyond, in the house with her husband. Especially if they turn unruly, and start making a lot of noises after a few ounces have gone inside. Moreover the change that comes into her husband's personality may be painful. Apart from all that, would be nuisance of cleaning up the place when all the unruly elements have gone. But beyond all this could be the deep feeling of insecurity that comes in knowing that the person, in whose security she is living, is at times in a half dazed form.

In certain cases a newly married girl may be amused by these things due to the novelty of the whole affair. But it is only a matter of a few days experience, for her to come to the conclusion that these things don't have any of the sense of grandeur, which the drunks would be claiming all along. Moreover the revelation that much of the valuable money which could be spend on better and more healthy entertainment, and also for something of value



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for the whole of the family is being squandered on a pack of ruffians, would create real distress in a loyal wife.

Drinking can be practised at home, if it is done among decent companions who come not to get drunk, but for other levels of socialising and then a small whiff of it served as one serves tea. And on festive occasions also. It is good if it is used as something, which is good in small quantities, but harmful in large quantities. And not as something to lose one's senses and behave outrageously.

In some families, along with the husband, the wife also partakes of a small amount of liquor. If it is taken by responsible persons with such sense, then it is not a problem. Otherwise, if it leads to disgraceful behaviour then it could lead to a lowering of social stature for the family. In this regard, it may be noted that *beer* is a drink, which can be used in homes on odd occasions.



The growing indifference: Some husbands, after a few years of marriage, develop an indifference to the company of their wife and children. They find it more interesting to spend their spare time under trees, in clubs, in social gatherings, in cinema halls, in drama theatres, in bars, in invigorating political debates and some even go in search of baser pleasures. Their wives have to continue with their daily toil of washing their clothes, feeding the children, wiping the house clean, keeping the food hot and ready for the unexpected arrival of her husband, sometimes with a few of his friends etc.

Many of these gentlemen manage to build up a reputation of a socially important person. But most of them at home treat their wives at home with scarce attention. Their whole fascination is with the theme of what their companions are doing. It may be seen that, even though many of them may seem successful in social circles of whatever level they are moving, many of



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them suffer from a feeling of some inadequacy, by which they feel lost if they are not right in the middle of some social commotion. These types of husbands will have long suffering wives. Somebody with some sense will have to induce into their head that they have a deeper responsibility to their wife, children and home.

Some of them go in for deep drinking in mean company. And in the deep of night come home, either in their own vehicles, if they have one, or in the vehicle of their companions, if they have it, or come swinging by on their own. It is a real tragedy for the wife to have to bear this. The nocturnal knock, the half-asleep mood and the heating of food in the cold night and all such things could make a wife's sublime emotions of affection for her husband, evaporate.

If the wife does sense that the husband is drinking heavily with an aim of wreaking vengeance on her for something she may have



inadvertently done, then it is for her to put in all her effort in cajoling her husband to open up, so that her mistake may be understood and rectified. If, instead the wife also adopts a revengeful attitude, then it may very well be the beginning of the end as far as that family is concerned. And here it must be emphasised that the wife does have a very responsible role to play.

The twilight period lasting a fortnight: One of the physiological experiences that a man can never experience is that of the menstrual period and the allied emotional and physical distress involved. It is a period, which may last a few days to a fortnight, varying from person to person. Many women may be able to take it in their stride, but even then it is a time of a certain level of discomfort. But in others it may be accompanied by severe emotional changes, making them turn highly sensitive to stress. They might react with the utmost violence at the smallest hint of disturbance. Actually, it is a



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time when emotional relations are highly controlled by various things such as hormones etc. In these times, it is the duty of the husband to see that their wives are not given any unreasonable stress, either physical or mental. And also, if possible, an understanding husband should help her in the heavy daily chores.

The dispensable companion: Most husbands do have feelings of deep attachment for their wives, but most of them do not know how to go about it. One of the main things that they can give their wives is companionship. But, this for many men is an impossibility. For them, a companion is a male friend, with whom they can be at ease, sharing the slimy jokes, and events in the various fields of activity. To do the same with a wife would be an unimaginable thing for many men. Some would even go to the extent of contending that a wife is someone who should show consistent respect to them, and who would obediently



carry out all their wishes and commands. To bring them to the level of a companion with whom one can talk with the customary ease of expression is not thinkable. These men may be from a very ancient mould of mental status. But the fact is that such men do abound this country. To them a wife is better than a servant, but definitely not of the class of a friend. Such men do not know what they are missing.

Yet, a slight digressing is needed here. The feudal content in the language does call for a *dominating* attitude to get a *respectful* subordinate. The concept of equality does not work correctly in feudal languages.

But in the case of more enlightened levels of couples, there is a theme of equality and sharing of pleasure and pain. Yet, the husband may forget the many things that are essential to the mental well-being of a wife. Especially, if she is just a housewife with no avenues to go



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out of the house, other than for small-time shopping.

The small pleasures that lend the sparkle: A film seen, a small shopping, a walk in the park, a visit to the seaside, a visit to the house of the parents, a small picnic, all this in the company of the husband and children could relax the wife very much. And at home, a regular friendly talk about the general themes, a reading of a book together, a joint weekly cleaning of the house etc. are all good for a healthy family life. Instead, if everyday, the husband puts on a grouchy face, and marches straight to his business or official papers and to the phone to converse his friends, then it may be said that there is no such a thing as family life. The husband would be in one world and the wife in another; each of them not knowing anything about what the other is doing. It may as well as be two entirely different persons with different lives to live. There is not need to emphasize the fact that the husband is neglecting his wife,



and is naturally losing much of what a happy married life could really have given him. For, it is the small things and small pleasures that give life the cheerfulness that it desperately requires. And if the man does not want it, it is really a tragedy, for both the wife and her husband.

**The factor of Infidelity:** Now we come to the delicate subject of infidelity in husbands. To put it on record, it is an aspect, which is more common all over the world in men than in women. Or at least more men aim for it, than do women. In a way, it is in the nature of things, as it is more easier for men to be promiscuous than women. Moreover, the society frowns on the latter than it does on the former. And in our country, it is more or less a man's world, when it comes to the basics; for at many levels of interaction and independent movement, there are restrictions for the women.



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But it is not a habit to be cultivated; in fact, it is one of the most terrible things that a married man can do to his family, wife and children. It destroys everything that is of value to him. He is a cheat, who will go on living in the eternal fear of being cheated himself. This very factor in itself makes it a most horrid thing. For, it can poison the whole atmosphere in a family. In such a situation, every one of the members of the family, including the children, are effected by the dishonesty in the atmosphere.

Infidelity need not mean the extreme situation, where a man is living with and sleeping with another woman. It can even be in thought, like just yearning to be with another woman, taking her as a constant companion, using money for her convenience, buying her clothes, taking her around, and generally doing everything for another woman, what one should actually be doing for one's own wife.



Enchantment at the distance: In many manners, it is easy for a woman who is not his wife, to sweep a man off his feet. The same man who is indifferent to the emotions in his wife's eyes will chance to see many things in another woman's eyes, even the rainbow. Maybe, it just the case of distance lending enchantment. But everyman should be aware of this fact, and the shallowness of the effect.

The vibes of another woman: Men should always avoid situations where they become involved with women to a greater intimacy than is good. And if they do have any level of understandings with any woman, which may go beyond the requirements of professional need, it would be a good idea if his wife were made very much aware of what all things are happening. A good level of communication between the husband and wife to the extent of discussing all the possibilities, in a lighter vein would be a good thing. By such communication between them, it would be possible to build up



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a team feeling between the husband and wife, to the exclusion of the third woman, who may, despite all levels of intimacy, remain an outsider to the intimacy between them, and to their family life.

Events, and companions, which lead one astray: It is easy to lead a man astray, by the wrong companions, and by bewildering circumstances that come a man's way in his professional and social movements. When all these things do come by, the husband should always build up a conscience that would remind him of his wife at home, yearning for his company. In these things, any man would need to acquire a level of maturity, which only comes with experience. The requirement is that when one does do things, which in later years one may count as experience, an understanding of the consequences of one's actions should be borne in mind. And this should act as a warning signal, when things may go beyond the point of no return. In this



regard, I can easily bring up the stories of many men I know who destroyed their family lives, in a matter of a few months' strange and unbelievable happenings, which they, at that time, thought was something fantastic that was happening to them.

However in later times, they were terribly regretting that such things had come to pass. In these types of things, it is not easy to enumerate the types of things that may come up that could later destroy a happy family, which had included a contented wife and admiring children. It is only good to understand that such blissful things are rare in this world, and that many persons are longing to possess such a family life. Never underestimate the value of what you have, and know that it comes with a price; the price is your eternal *attention and attachment* to your family. If it is thrown away by yielding to the temptation of a momentary pleasure, then it is definitely a sad thing; for once lost, it is more or less lost, and if



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you try to rebuild on the ruins, it may take a long time for the wounds to heal and may be the scars might still show.

The flawed attractions: In certain cases, the husband may start taking more notice of the wife's sisters, especially younger or unmarried sisters, than is good. It is true that in Indian social conditions, the wife's sisters are considered as one's own sisters. And it should be so. But it would be a very unwise act to allow the husband to have uninhibited access to the charge of the wife's sisters, as ultimately it must be understood, they are not his sisters by blood. To allow them to be taken to the film parks, picnics etc. by him, in the absence of his wife are not to be practised. And it is the duty of the husband to refrain from such actions. It is not much of a problem, if the sister is a mature person, who is not obviously dominated by her sister's husband. But in the general Indian social conditions, along with the hierarchical language environment, they



generally are subservient to the elder sister's husband, at least in certain vernacular areas.

Moreover, if the husband takes a fancy to buying expensive dress and gifts to the sister, with scant regard to the requirements of the wife, then it would also be a thing that could have serious repercussions, leading to tensions and mental agony and sense of deep foreboding for the wife. It could even lead to a serious atmosphere of antipathy among the sisters. In some cases, the parents of the wife may even accuse her of being silly and concocting up weird fantasies. This may only make the wife more desperate. In such atmospheres, all others should understand that whether there is any substance or not in what is worrying the wife, the situations, which disturb her, should not be allowed to happen. In this regard, the husband has a grave duty to his wife. If he does not rise up to this, then he may reap the consequences in his later life.



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Certain men go in search of prostitutes. For some, it is a fixation and an obsession. Others go, for their need for variety; some because they are not getting contentment from their wives; others, because they have no other access to sex. It is not the intention of this writer to pass judgements on any of these compulsions, nor does it come under the purview of this book. But in the context of husband-wife relations, it needs to be discussed as to the cumulative effect such activities can have on family as a whole, and how it will effect the wife.

First and foremost, in our country having sex with prostitutes is a very dangerous thing, mainly due to the high possibility of catching grave diseases such as AIDS, syphilis, gonorrhoea etc. The first one has no cure as yet, and the latter ones are very crippling ones, if not cured in time. Added to that, they can give a person a very negative social image. Beyond all that, once a man is infected, then



the wife is the next natural victim. When a husband is sleeping with his wife, she should not regularly suffer from a terrible foreboding that each time her husband is having sex with her, he is infecting her with some appalling disease.

If there is no sense of security in the wife's mind, then no one can blame her if she is not going to enjoy the act, and refrains from participating in it with any feeling of consent. The act of sex, which is one of the main things, that creates a feeling of oneness between the husband and wife, will turn out to be an act of mental torture. And a misgiving that he is harbouring some macabre ailment, could be a real turn off for any feelings of attraction, that usually go with the act of lovemaking.

A man can spend a lot of money for the act of fornication with commercial sex workers. It depends on what level he is getting serviced at. And once he becomes compulsive about it,



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then it may be like any other addiction and he would not know how to limit his spending. He will not care about the damage to his financial stability it is causing. Along with it would come his reputation as a womaniser, and that too one with cheap tastes. And then he, and along with him whole family, may see that access to many social interactions is being denied.

His wife will suffer like hell. It is not easy for a man to hide his taste for prostitutes, and the first person to sense it would naturally be his wife. And if she is not able to sense it, rest assured that there many persons would inform her, either out of compassion or out of spite. And she would know that compassion comes along with contempt. And persons, who inform her from feelings of malice, would really enjoy the sounds of marital discord.

Few women will be able to bear the thought of her husband visiting prostitutes. It reflects a lot about her inability to satisfy her husband and



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keep him to herself, which in itself may not be true. For, there are many men who just like to taste the forbidden, and enjoy the variety it affords.

On the man's part, his partaking of such pleasures reflects a shallow understanding of his duties as a husband and a father. No man with a little bit of love for his wife and children would be able to bear the thought of his wife and children awaiting his presence, while he is whiling away his valuable time in search of solitary pleasures.

In other words, a husband who needs prostitutes to fulfil his needs has no reason to have a wife, for having a wife comes with a lot of responsibilities and etiquette. Yet, it also connects to his wife's urge to retain him.

The flawed contract: Yet, as a closing remark, I must say that there are wives who use the sexual urge of their husbands as a bargaining tool; and hence spoil the whole spontaneous



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ecstasy in the episode. They are also misfits to be wives.



## What is a good family life?

The essential ingredients: A good family life includes an affectionate husband, a loving wife and cheerful children. These are the essential ingredients. And since living is a dynamic event, there has to be various ways and means to maintain it that way. For, everyday is a different day.

The affection of the husband should encompass not only his wife, but also his children. And the best thing that a father can do to display his love for his children is to exhibit a deep love for their mother. For, if there is any sort of antipathy or disenchantment with his wife and he makes it very apparent, then no amount of petting or charming the children would be able to bring in an atmosphere of security to the children. A feeling of security and peace is one of the ingredients for the proper mental development of the children. And so it all amounts to the fact



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that for a happy and contended family living, there should be an atmosphere of deep and enduring attachment between the husband and the wife.

The imps: Yet, here one cannot disregard the responsibility of the wife in this crucial issue. It is her responsibility to rise up to the level of being worthy of her husband's affection. For, a wife with a nasty mood is not one to be loved and shown affection. If she acts impish, then the affection shown by a responsible husband becomes an act of foolishness.

Concealing the financial status: The question of finance is a major one, and there should be adequate means to secure it, so that the needs of the family can be met without difficulty. It is better if there is an atmosphere of open discussion about this factor between the spouses. Actually in our country, among a great many people, it is a subject that is not divulged to the wife, on the belief that it is none



of her business. And the general social climate in those areas may be conducive for such attitudes. But in the modern families, where the wife also comes with a lot worldly knowledge, it is not only not fair to keep her in the dark, but also dangerous, that she does not know the fluctuations that might effect it, and also about its source.

For, in modern times, she herself may have to take a lot of decisions, which might involve the question of finance. Generally the woman would be more careful of spending money on extravagances, if she does know the complete details of the family's financial standing. Otherwise, she would be at the level of a child who may pester the parent for all the useless, yet attractive things that may catch its eye. Each time the husband tries to please her with an extravagant gift, it would only whet her desire for more.

**Buying affection:** A husband who tries to buy



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the affection of his wife with expensive gifts, which he can ill afford, is doing a disservice to his whole family, including his wife and children. He will end up with financial commitments, which may gobble up his savings and lead him to the path of disaster. So it is always good that the wife also understands the complete financial situation. If a man fears that he would lose his wife's respect, if he discloses these details to her, then he may first understand the fact that he has no need of such a wife, whose affection is absolutely connected to the purse string. The fact is that, though the wife will initially be disillusioned by the figures, which may not match her expectation, in a short period of time she will understand the reality. Then there would be the much needed coming of maturity in her. In fact, from that moment onwards she will acquire the mentality to see to it that the family resources are not wasted on useless social exhibitions and buying of unwanted



gadgetry, without which the family can do equally well.

**Telepathic communication:** In a happy family, there should be unison of purpose; an understanding of what each of them is doing, and a capacity to anticipate what the other wants. Each should know what the other wants, to the extend that in most of the requirement of everyday life, there needn't be verbal communication required. It should be so smooth and effortless to arrange a thing for the other's convenience.

That much for the generalisations. Now we can go into the details.

A household comes with a husband, a wife and children. The husband would have to go out to his work. Some wives also may be having jobs. Most of the wives don't have jobs. The children may be very young, requiring continuous attention or they may be going to school.



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Facing the morning: It is a very healthy habit if both the spouses get up early in the morning and get about with their morning chores. If the wife is a housewife, it is not a definite requirement that the husband should help in the kitchen. He can if he has the time and mood. Otherwise it is better that he gets ready for his own going out. And he can await the morning tea. But if both the spouses are employed and need to go out, then it is an absolute necessity that he helps in the kitchen. And if there are children who have to be sent to school, then the husband should absolutely take care of many of the things in the morning busy hours. But it need to be said that most of the husbands are addicted to their daily dose of newspaper reading, and the only help he might extend to his wife, who is toiling in the kitchen might be an occasional comment on the shocking thing that has come across his attention in the paper.

This is not a very attractive attribute, nor is it a



commendable one. But many women bear this grouse injustice in silence. But, it is not a thing about which a wife should react aggressively, for a nice talk of a suggestion that it might help if this habit of morning browsing of the paper could to be dispensed with, might help.

A matter of physical ease: One of the things that really set the good mood of a man for the day is that he has been able to relieve himself in the toilet. For many people, it is a very sensitive issue, and any tension or distraction in the morning hours may cause a temporary constipation, which will destroy the mood of the whole day. Though some husbands may not have mentioned it as such to the wife, it is only a reasonable thing for a wife to understand this need, and advise her husband to maintain a proper timing for it, so that it, as an absolute necessity, is finished. To put it frankly, this is a very relieving thing for many persons, which will improve their spirit no little.



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Warming up, physically: A bit of a warming up exercise, in which both participate, along with the children could also be an ideal thing, which will further improve the sense of physical wellbeing, and could by itself lead to a pleasant atmosphere inside the house. For, a husband who is like a couch potato, is a very unattractive being.

An air of spontaneous communication and gaiety: There should be an atmosphere of cheer and laughter inside the four walls of a house. A cold forlorn and dreary climate, which would infect everybody, should not be there. Spontaneity of humour and gaiety would go a long way in bringing brightness to the countenance of all, and engage them in actions of mutual good. An atmosphere of easy interaction between the different members of the family should be there. The stifling feudal hierarchy that exists in our society should not be allowed to enter the premises, and infect the various levels of the family members. To



put it in more clear words, the feudal levels of superiority and inferiority that go with difference of age and status should not be there. But in areas where only pure vernacular is the spoken language, it may not be able to do away with it altogether.

On perceiving the cause of mental agitations: There should not be scenes of discord between the spouses. Angry retorts and spontaneous bursting out with anger, all point to weak spots in the relationships. And if a clear analysis could be made on these issues, it will be evident that there are many other issues that are actually causing the mental disturbances. Especially if it is found that frequent shouting matches are going on between the husband and wife, and yet both of them understand that they both have feelings of affection for each other, then the need to find out the real cause that is sparking the issue is important. One of the things in this regard, when one of the spouses is reacting



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strongly, is for the other person to understand that there are some problems, which is genuinely disturbing him or her and causing this response.

Don't take this lightly. For, it is the duty of the other person to communicate with his or her spouse, when he or she is in a less disturbed mood, and find out the real reason. And even then, the real reason may not be forthcoming, as sometimes this person may find it awkward to put all his or her feelings in words. For he or she may feel foolish, or sometimes the person may not have enough communication abilities to put the whole undercurrent of emotions into words, or sometimes the person may not have a clear idea of what is really disturbing him or her, other than that certain things, actions, events, words or persons are causing mental agitation.

**Irking factors:** Sometimes it could be the actions, gestures, tone, the words used, the



facial expression etc. of the spouse, which is irking the other. Or it could be the philosophies and attitude to life of the spouse. Or it could be the habits and levels of cleanliness of the other. Or it could be the company the other keeps. Or it could be that of anyone of his or her family members, like father, mother, brother, sister, uncle, aunt etc. Or it could be something to do with the people in the neighbourhood. Or it could be something that is a continuing irritation in the workplace. Or it could be something that has happened sometime back or something that is happening in some other place. Many things can activate a human mind in singular directions.

It is the absolute obligation of the other person to understand what are the topics and circumstances that are causing consternation in the spouse. In this enterprise, an attitude of understanding, compassion and affection should be there, and the whole thing should be considered with a deep analytical mind. In



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such deliberations, the spouse himself or herself is the best person to do it. As much as possible try to avoid the help or advice of others who may or may not be relatives. For, sometimes the attitude of the spouse to get outsiders' advice on each and everything might be the very problem.

Intrusive counsellors as part of the problem: If there is someone in the acquaintance of either of the spouses who is not known to the other, who may have the capability to evaluate the situation, then he or she can be sought for getting a detached suggestion as to what is the problem that may be irking the other spouse. In this regard, care should be taken to see that this is first of all a person who has the worldly knowledge and insight to understand the intricacies of human relationships, and also the integrity to keep the information, passed on to him or her, confidential and also not to make profit out of it. In this regard, there should be an understanding that there are many persons



in this world who are desperate to act as mediators in places of distrust and dispute, that they really carve for such situations and problems. Never allow such persons into the realm of family affairs, for they would, with characteristic ease, create more problems than solve. Moreover, they would create an everlasting need for themselves, to the extent that they would become an indispensable apparition in all the affairs of the couple.

The guiding principle should be that no third person should have an access to the spaces between the spouses. For, if things reach such a state, then it is a mighty bad situation. And the sublime theme should be that the family, which includes the spouse and children, comes first, and then only comes the opinion and reactions of others. And in every endeavour, let an earnest affection for your spouse motivate you.

**Reacting to provocations:** There may be times



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when one of the spouses goes into deep despondency, due to something. In which case, the best treatment is to find the reason for this, and try to get that changed. The cure will come automatically. Don't, for God's sake, heed the advice of some ill-advised person and straight away put him or her into the clutches of some half-baked doctor who may pump in some drug, the cumulative effect of which the doctor himself may be working out.

In these times of terrible stress, remember that there are times when things are bad, and there are times when it is good. The bad, we have to face with fortitude. Also, remember that in almost all cases, where a person is reacting with terrible anger, there is someone who is making him angry. The cure is to see that such provocation and provocative persons are removed from the victim's presence, and then there will be a remarkable change visible.

The intelligence in deferring certain decisions:



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*Living within the means* is something that should be practised with enduring patience. It is something, which can affect the overall ethical standards of the family, and the impression the family builds up in the society at large. For, once a family practices this technique of making their limited levels of income to stretch to the maximum, by applying the principles of austerity on things which don't need to be done with pomp and pageantry, then they can be assured of an income which is enough. The couple would need to discuss what the essentials are for a month and decide to use the funds most efficiently. Like buying the vegetables which are cheap at that time, buying provisions in bulk, if required, if there is a cost reduction if done so etc. And in buying clothes, which are good, even though they are a bit expensive, for the saving comes in the way of the lasting of the clothes. Both the spouses should decide not to make any purchase on the spur of the moment, and



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always consult the other in such matters. This is more so, when confronting a salesman with a glib tongue. For, if one of the spouses is convinced by the talk of a salesman who has come to sell some household goods, and the other is not, then don't take the decision immediately. Defer the decision, if the thing is expensive.

Never make on-the spot-decisions about buying of such things as land, building, house, vehicle etc. without the consent and knowledge of the spouse, and a discussion on this regard has been done in privacy. That is, if the spouse is not a businessman in these items. And also, when signing any agreements or making monetary commitments, see that proper discussion has been done at home. For, sometimes the spouse may come up with fantastic insights.

On diverging attitudes: There is then the problem of the different attitudes of husband



and wife to the habit of spending. If one of the spouses is a person who is very careful in spending, and the other has a more liberal attitude in this, then there might be problems. Especially if the family finances are not very sound. In this aspect also, there should be a definite policy, especially till the time the family is financially strong.

There should be a habit of making a budget for at least one month. A provision should be made to save something for medical expenses that might crop up at odd times. If possible, a medical insurance policy, also. And some steady savings for the proverbial *rainy day*. A life insurance policy making the children, the beneficiaries might reduce a bit of the tension with regard to the future of the children.

On deceit as a way of livelihood: Let there be an attitude to be truthful and virtuous, in dealings with the members of the family, which include the spouses and the children, and to



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the world at large. A habit of keeping the word and commitments, to the children and the spouse could bring in a feeling of respect that goes beyond mere affection. But with regard to a virtuous disposition to the world at large, there are many dimensions. And to put it frankly, in our country, it is a proposition, which many significant persons would find a bit of tough to practise, especially the government servants. Though it is not in the parameters of the topic of this book to go into the theme of bureaucratic corruption, all persons who are in the bureaucracy should bear in mind that they are not displaying a habit worthy of emulation when they make money by dishonest means. And when one of the spouses is being deceitful to the world, then what the other spouse and the children get as moral teaching is one of the worst kinds. Bear this in mind. For, even if destiny may leave you, *nemesis* may not.

A theme on positive energy: The premises of the house should be neat and clean. A clean



and tidy house improves the atmosphere, and makes the mood positive. On the contrary, an untidy, unkempt house is a real inauspicious thing, which will infect the inhabitants with a lot of negativity. Let both the spouses and the children take effort to maintain a healthy atmosphere in the house. Let there be a place for everything and a place for disposing of the wastes. The toilets should also be spick and span. A large open window might bring in the free fresh air. But, sadly in many places in our country, the reality is that it only brings in mosquitoes.

Supernatural sciences and superstitions: I don't want to suggest that you should become superstitious. But if you do have belief, then it won't do any harm if you arrange your house according to the major concepts of the *vastushastra*. And even if you do not have much belief in its benevolence, if your attitude is one of taking the extra care, then it won't do you any harm if you heed its suggestions, if



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they do not go against common sense, and propriety.

There might be the parents of either of the spouses living in the house. Though it is not necessary for anyone of the spouses to be a sort of serving person, to the parents of the other, if they are aged persons, then it is required that proper care should be extended to them. And such love displayed to them might add on to the attachment the spouses have for each other. The full extent of this aspect of the relationship to the parents-in-law, shall be detailed at a later stage.

Another aspect is that of the children. They are one of the major fruits of married life, and the whole theme of how to bring up children needs to be discussed in detail.

Another very important aspect to a very happy married life is that of sex and its complexities. This also requires detailed treatment.



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## The aspect of sex

This is a very delicate subject that needs to be handled with a soft touch. For it comes with all the complexities, that exist in our country. But we needn't go into all that straight away, and when the context comes up, we will elaborate on them.

The Greek muscles and the alluring curves: But as a beginning, a mention of where sex should exist in a married life should be made. After one's marriage, it should not exist in the fine, sensual figure of your wife, or in the curves that oscillate in differing shapes. Or in the Greek muscles that move with silent perfection in the arms and chest of the husband. It should exist in the mind, where the stimulation of sex should come from a real affection for the partner. So, in sex the theme would become one of giving, and not one of extracting pleasure. But to the art of giving exquisite sensual delight is the requirement to



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make oneself attractive and also the duty to prepare oneself for this act of extending love to one's life partner.

Now we can go into the practicalities of actual married sex.

The first touch and the outburst of sensual emotions: Before elaborating on this theme, let me just say that the first touch of the husband has a magnificent effect on a newly-wed wife. Especially in arranged marriages, where the first physical touch is only possible after marriage. Let this physical occasion be reserved for the nuptial bed. It in itself can help a lot in opening sexual emotions in the bride, in a most effective manner. And mind you, this first touch can never be redone. So don't waste it in a hurry.

Apart from this, there is no great need to consummate the act of sexual penetration on the very first night, itself. Let the first night be spent in talking about the so many things that



need to be communicated to each other, along with periods of long, relaxed petting and exploring.

This book is not intended to be a guide on sexual techniques, but as there is some need to discuss this theme in the context of a happy and contented marital relationship, a brief allusion shall be done on that subject.

The minor distractions: One of the major things that could effect the sexual performance, is the over expectations and the tension that comes from the aim to display a fantastic act or presentation. Actually in a married life, when one is aiming for a long and enduring relationship, there is no need to aim for such spectacular displays. In fact, in the early days of sexual intercourse, there is a great deal of chance that things may not go smoothly. To put it blandly, penetration may not take place; there could be problems with erection; the bride may have severe tension, which could



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end up in her having severe pain; it may take sometime to find a suitable posture for intercourse; actually there may be innumerable things that may make the initial enterprises a failure. But, these things need not worry a groom or dismay a bride. For, in these failures do the seeds of success lie.

**The strangled mental mood:** One of the main reasons for a lot of hiccups and mishaps in this regard, is the reason that for most Indians, sexual experience is a very exotic theme. Beyond that, in this nation, most persons do live in strange strangled mental mood. Not only the bride, but also the groom, does not have proper grooming in themes regarding sex.

**The exquisite discoveries:** The sexual act in marriage is one long journey of discovery; of what all things a partner likes and what all things repel him or her. It should go about in a slow manner, which may take a few days. But then, what is the hurry? And there is no need



to convince any other person about the successes and tribulations of this exquisite journey. What is learnt is for one another, to help each other to better the act in the next step.

**The consternation:** But the general case is that there is a sense of deep consternation in the minds of both the groom and the bride, when things don't proceed as per their fantasies. Most of this is caused by what can be described as *peer pressure*; the general, shallow understanding of what the sex stands for in marriage, among the laymen. For, at that level, it is associated with certain levels of prowess, which may be true in a different context. This deep sense of failure, which comes from such deficient understanding, is in itself a grave drawback, which may lead to other complications such as low self esteem, inferiority complex etc.



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Masculinity and femininity: But it must be emphasised that the groom should exhibit required masculinity and the bride, the femininity to proceed with this act. But the complete definition of these terms may not come in the purview of this book, for there may be disagreement on this count, especially about the parameters of femininity, as understood by the different levels of women that exist in this country. Among the traditional type men, they like their women to be coy, shy and extremely passive in initiating the sexual act. A bride who may not seem to fit into this bracket may be a slight turn off, on the marriage night for these men. On the contrary, the liberated types may prefer a more communicative person, who may even indulge in active participation in the act, on the very first night itself. But it is not possible to classify either type into definite categories. This applies to the men also. But in the actual act, a level of



active participation by the female also, would lead to more pleasant experiences.

The effect of downsizing: As regards the man, there is a component of our feudal language and social set up also, which may come into play in some circumstances. Because of the severe downsizing of a person's individuality that some of our languages may do to a person who is a subordinate or an inferior in such things as age, finance etc.; in an environment where the male does feel a stifling, he may experience a certain disability to display his full mental and physical potential. But if the same person moves out of this stifling circumstance, his chances of improving his act, as a person of individual capabilities, may improve. This may be one of the factors that it is said that a great majority of married Indian women don't achieve sexual fulfilment, for this problem associated with language is a universal phenomenon in our country. (See my



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book: March of the Evil Empires: English verses feudal languages).

The essential elements: Beyond the feelings of love and affection, there are the needs of certain other ingredients also which go on to help in achieving sexual gratification. One is, there should be an inclination to build up desire, and a limited amount of eagerness for the act, which should be a sort of yearning in the subconscious. The second is, there should be an absolute level of neatness, and cleanliness in the body and in the environment, so that the whole act of lovemaking gets registered in the memory as an incident of sweet scent and sweeter scenes. Third is, there should be an understanding that the sense of touch plays a definite part, in this act; that fondling and caressing should be a thing which should be done in excess, but with a delicacy that could improve the sensations, with both the persons practising it with an aim to satiate the other partner. Fourth is, there



should be a continuing atmosphere of communication between the partners during the whole act, otherwise it would feel like one is doing a procedure of acute physical exercise. Five is, as far as possible the environment in the house, where the couple are aiming to make love, should be peaceful, with nobody in an hostile and unfriendly mood, especially the parents or some other senior relatives. Sixth is, good food can improve the appetite for a healthy sex. Seventh, is the factor of sensual looks, especially in the female. And beyond all this is the need that there should no feelings of rancour between the couple. If there is, no amount of all the above-mentioned items can compensate for the loss of sensual feelings that can creep in.

The growing apathy: Taking up point number one, it is seen that there is a progressive decline in the attraction of sex after a brief period of intense lovemaking, immediately after the marriage. Many factors can lead to this



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apathy. But one of the techniques to bring it back alive is to build up the desire with deliberate activities. Like doing some sort of fantasising about the spouse in various stirring poses. A bit of sensuous talk with the partner might help in the case of some. Some persons even get the help from suggestive writings and pictures. Whether such things should be advisable to all is a debatable point, even though it may be said that in slight doses they may do a bit of help. But as in the case of alcohol, an excess may lead a person to extremes of emotions which are neither desirable nor healthy; and the context of lovemaking in marriage may get mixed up with the sensations of obscene pleasure.

The sickening aspects: It is good, nay imperative that both the spouses take a bath before commencing a lovemaking session, especially if they have had a session of intense physical activity. The various places in the body, where there can be an accumulation of



odour and sweet should be washed and the genital areas should be clean and tidy. If anyone of the partners has a problem of bad breath (*halitosis*), then it should be cured. In this regard it must be mentioned that in most cases it is caused by the decay in the gums of the teeth, which can be cured with a short period dose of certain homeopathic medicine. If not cured, it can exist as a turnoff for the other partner.

The genitals should also be clean, or else the chance of the bride catching the so-called *honeymoon syndrome* is high.

Sensual dresses: Clean and, if possible, sensual dressing may enhance the mood. In this regard the dresses in which they look best may be chosen, and those in which the looks diminish may be avoided. A long mirror in the room may or may not help, depending on how it may affect the participants. (As per occult sciences, it is not advisable to have a mirror



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*pointing directly into the bed).* Some persons may like the look of the partner's body, in the light of a soft, small, red or some other colour light, while some others may get restrained by it.

The irking coyness: In the initial periods, a shyness to exhibit all the curves of the body to the husband may be natural in women, but it should be speedily changed to an attitude of allowing the wishes of the partner. Otherwise each lovemaking session may proceed through a series of endeavours and blocks or resistances.

On the art of lovemaking: In our country, where a significant part of the populace has crude ideas on the art of love-making, there needs to be some idea of the finer aspects of this art. One of the best places to view the some of the liberal variation of this art may be seen from the English films. For, many of them do exhibit unrestrained display of passion, along with



some the techniques involved in bringing about an outburst of passion. For those who have not much idea about what are the different ways to approach sex, in all its exiting variations, these may provide a cheap outlet to gain knowledge. But these films should be understood to be different from pornographic films, which aim at indecent voyeuristic enjoyment of crude sex. Viewing blue films and reading pornographic literature for this purpose may not only be useless, but may also be counterproductive in the sense that they may mislead the person to think that the art of lovemaking in marital life to be something comparable to some exhibition of physical prowess, with no connection to the feelings of deep romantic attachment. Normal English feature films do show only the decent part of passion and endearment.

The essentials of fondling: Touching each other with deep affection is a very fascinating experience. Generally a caressing of any part of the body by the other is a nice experience.



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There may be parts, which one of the partners would like to be caressed more. In this aspect, an understanding that there is nothing forbidden or wrong or dirty, when the total aim is to give much exhilaration to the other, should be there. And each person should build up a list of things, the other likes done, and touched and caressed. All these things can be included in the foreplay, which should necessarily be a prelude to any sexual intercourse. A relaxed, highly communicative atmosphere is necessary for this phase, wherein each partner can choose and change the course of the fondling, according to the inputs from the other.

Just a show of affection: A reciprocal display of eagerness to enter into physical intimacy shown by the other partner can be a real turn on for a spouse. At the same time, it should necessarily be kept in mind that all fondling, petting, touching, embracing, kissing etc. need not go the whole way to the level of sexual intercourse. For these things can also be taken



as just tokens of romantic attachment and affection, and not as the techniques of foreplay. For, if every time one of the partners tries to *extend* a bit of display of affection into the whole course of intercourse, the other may be a bit wary to reciprocate such actions of affection unless mentally ready for the sexual aspect. Let such romantic cuddling be prolonged and enjoyed as just that, and in many times it may give a wholesome mood of exhilaration.

The caressing communication: During the whole course of the intercourse, there should be continual communication between them. It helps, for one, in prolonging the period of intercourse. Moreover there is more understanding of what the other needs, and is experiencing. Apart from this, there is no need to do the thing in a hurry and get over with it. This hurry is okay, in cases where what the man need is just a satiation of his carnal desires for the time being and wants to use the



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effect as a sort of sleeping pills. It can be a very fascinating experience to just prolong the peak, for as long as is possible, before the inevitable outburst of urge comes to finish off.

Painful penetration: One of the things that can cause an enduring problem could be the tension of the bride on the first night or on the first day of sexual intercourse. It could lead to a freezing of passions, causing the lubricating liquid not to appear in the vagina. The effect may be painful entry, to both the persons. Yet, this is actually a rare case. But, if the bride does exhibit a tendency to freeze from tension or lack of proper preparation, then a little lubrication applied on the genitals, could help, to ward off an experience of painful penetration. Beyond this there is a medical condition called *Vaginismus*, which causes painful penetration. This needs medical treatment. Some sex therapists do recommend a type of exercise for the pelvic floor muscles, called *Kegel exercise*.



Frigidity as a dampening factor: Some women may suffer from sexual frigidity. It means that she would not enjoy the act of sex, and there would not be any physiological changes in her body, like the secretion of the lubricating fluid in the vagina etc. In most cases, this is caused by mental tension, or by some other factor which is acting as a turn off. By a level of intimate communication between the spouses, the situation may be cured. If not, medical counselling/treatment may be required. And if not effectively cured, this very factor can dampen the liveliness of the marriage.

In this regard, it may be noted that there are certain women who get pain on sexual penetration, even if there is adequate foreplay. This is a real medical condition, which requires medical intervention. If the bride does have this, then no amount of foreplay or other means of sexual coaxing can reach her to a level of enjoyment. For, each time penetration



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is attempted, pain would set in, and spoil the whole procedure for both of them.

**Finale with apathy:** After the sexual act is over, certain men have a habit of just curling up to one side and dozing off, without the least concern for wife. It is not at all a good attitude. For, it will only be a part of the continuing display of affection to continue with an embrace for some more time, till there is a gradual loosening up of nerves.

Again, there are wives who would try to push off their husbands, the moment the ejaculation is over. They also could deeply hurt their partners.

**Ponderings on innovative approaches:** And when the same type of sexual intercourse becomes stale, there can be variations, which should be discussed with the spouse in all earnestness. If it is found that there is a sort of communication block for discussing these delicate aspects, then it needs to be said that



there still is a lack of perfect intimacy between the spouses.

Trivial factors that create major havoc: Now, for all this exquisite emotional experience to come about, there should be a calm and peaceful atmosphere in the home. Stressful thoughts or even other persons in the next room who bear an animosity to either of the spouses, or parents or other elders who are grumbling in the house, all these things can be a rude disturbance to the intense concentration that is a prerequisite to the perfection of an affectionate sexual experience.

When both the husband and the wife are mentally at peace and strength, the act of sex is naturally bound to be a success. Yet, in our nation, with its supremely disturbing feudal languages, either one or the other or both can be in some state of mental disturbance, from the act, attitude, gesture, words, tone etc. of some others, either subordinates or superiors



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or just strangers. All these may act as mental attacks that can cripple a nice act of sexual lovemaking.

**When forbearance is required:** There may be times, when the man needs sex, and the wife is not in the mood; or vice versa. Some sort of adjustment or slight participation may be needed; or the act should be postponed. It may not be a good idea to force it on the partner, when he or she is not in the mood. And, also, during the period of menstruation, there is need for the man to forbear.

**What you eat and drink:** Food can be a great aphrodisiac. And lack of proper nutritional food can cause the passions to freeze. Before engaging in a spirited session of physical intimacy, let there be a prelude of good eating, which consist of energy rich nutrients. But alcohol is something, which is definitely of a different category. A little bit may rouse the spirits and enliven the mood, but in excess,



and that need not be to the level of being drunk, it can be a real troublemaker. In fact, it can blunt the sensibilities and make a person numb to the finer aspects of those magic moments of intimacy. In fact, if a person has had a nice experience without the help of alcohol, there is no need for him to imbibe the potion, for it won't bring in pleasanter experiences.

Massaging as an act of conveying passion: Once in a while, it would be good to have a period of massaging of one of the spouses by the other. It can be done with oil or with powder, or with nothing else, other than plain hand. There is no need to do it in a professional manner. For, any level of massaging can be delightful, if done with earnestness.

Sleeping with one's spouse: Now beyond all this is the understanding of the sublime fact that, after marriage, the most wonderful



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experience is the feeling of heavenly peace one gets when one is lying down at the side of one's spouse, if affection is there.

What lovemaking can create: Having sex with one's spouse, and being able to enjoy it thoroughly is a very, very fulfilling experience.

Yet, for some reasons, most of times, for most people the extreme bliss of sex is an elusive event. This is mostly so due to the multitudes of other exasperating issues that causes to distract the mind from a full dose of essential concentration and preparation for this beautiful experience.

As an emotional and psychological medication that lends mental serenity, a good dose of lovemaking has no other serviceable substitute. Now, this theme has to be understood in its full reality by both the spouses. That is, when there is emotional turmoil or some other issues that tend to bring in negativity to the household, an ardour for



physical love for one's spouse can really be a most positive thing to happen between the spouses.

Moreover, let it be known that when times are bad, finances are crumbling, and there is a general air of failure in the air; make effort for a continuing episode of successful lovemaking. I believe that this very success, created by the spouses, can bring in a dose of positive energy to all their other worldly efforts. And where there is an absence of lovemaking between the spouses, somehow, failures also will come to haunt the household. For, the very block that exists here can somehow be the initiator of many other blocks, in one's material life.

Moreover during lean years, when things tend to fall apart, and the future looks bleak, the keenness to continue one's physical attachment to one's spouse, can really create the necessary emotional force that can lend



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much help to the effort to cross, the difficult times.

The forbidden grounds: Now, I need to go into forbidden grounds: The themes discussed can really be argued to be beyond the purview of married sex. Yet, they are not.

The themes include such proscribed themes as of the husband and wife jointly viewing pornographic films, reading similar literature together, indulging in sexual fantasizing, premeditating on and even actually participating in group sex, orgies, or even in partner-swapping. Even though when seen from areas of cultured living styles, they may seem very, very novel, and extremely modern enterprises, the fact remains that the essential emotions behind these themes could be as old as human history itself.

Even though it may not be my job to point to the moral issues involved, I can very well



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debate on issues of what are the implications of these actions on one's family life.

Watching pornography together: It is true that there are couples who have experimented with all the features described above. So far as watching pornographic films is considered, it is possibly the most harmless of all the things mentioned herein above. Yet, even doing this can have multifarious affects on human psychology.

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It can be seen that watching sexual acts in their extreme explicit version does stimulate a lot of sensual thoughts in persons. Naturally, many men do indulge in this. Yet, in the Indian context, it is when women watch the same that the issue becomes more ominous. For, the lingering issue of what would a sexually aroused woman do to satiate her awoken passions, remains most unresolved in the husband's mind. If he is a man to worry on this, naturally it can bring in problems. Yet, when



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most husbands and wives sit together to watch the spellbinding scenes, this concern is the least in their minds. For, what is aimed at is a grand unity of purpose; that of enjoying the forbidden fascinations to the core; for they appeal to the core of sexual fantasies, and kindles real physical sensations.

It is possible that this experience in itself may not create much awkward feelings in the husband. Yet, when certain husbands chance to live faraway from his wife, for long periods for any reasons, it is possible that some men may feel discomfited by the reminiscences of their wife's unseemly interest in the theme of other men's sexual performances. Actually this feeling also need not come much into the picture, unless there seem a possibility that his wife is in close contact with other men, who appear in the guise of aides and collaborators. Or if it seems that his wife is of such doubtful mettle that she can be prevailed upon or seduced, with proper premeditation. It all



depends on with whom the wife is living, in the absence of her husband; and also the cultural standards of the persons involved; and even on the proximity/layout of other men's residence to the place of residence of the wife's.

Now, what has been described is the unconstructive and downbeat side of this activity. Yet, there are positive sides also to this activity. For one, this is one activity that can rekindle the sexual urges in a married live, where the cinders are dieing out. For persons, who do not have much ideas about the manifold techniques used in sex, viewing such themes can be a source of information; even though, a much seamy one at that.

There are many persons, many of them women, and a few men folk who have a distinct distaste to the various body organs, which actually play a major part in sexual stimulation. For them, viewing pornography



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can be a real eye-opener. It is true that this is a much shabby route to sexual information. Yet, in this nation, for many persons, more healthy routes are not available.

Taken in a proper and healthy mental mood, viewing pornography at odd times, by married couple can have a positive effect, in awakening sexual feelings. It can be used as a substitute for foreplay at times; yet, developing this habit to a level of dependency can be a real problem. Let everything be kept within proper limits.

**Sexual fantasising:** Now we come to the more forbidden theme of sexual fantasising. It is possible that both husband as well as wives do indulge in it; without the knowledge of their spouses. It is generally believed that this activity also does input in a lot of healthy enjoyment in the act of sex. Now, there are couples who have developed this art to the level of cooperative effort. That is both the



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husband and wife, declare what is to be fantasised by each, so that both of them enjoy not only their own fantasies, but also that of their spouses. Some of them actually describe in great detail their imaginations to the other, to sort of create an imaginary scene right in the bedroom. Some couple indulge in the more difficult art of jointly enacting out explicit sexual adventures, with themselves as well as other imaginary participants. Some imaginations do go beyond the boundaries to that of group sex or orgies. Actually, this level of united mental exercises requires a lot mental affinity; and in certain cases only one of the spouses can successfully enact it out.

Again this is an action that can have both healthy as well as unwelcome repercussions. For, the declared fantasising will naturally be on known persons. And if it chances to be on persons with whom the corresponding spouses are to be together with, then there is a distinct possibility that it can lead to complications. For



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one, the fantasising can really become attached to the spouse's mind to the extent of radiating out of his or her personality to the other person. And really giving non-tangible vibes to the other person to respond.

Or it can really lead the other spouse to worry about the possibilities of such events happening in his or her absence. So a healthy manner would be to use persons, who are physically far away. Also, it should be on persons with whom the other spouse has no competing mentality.

**Reading pornography:** Reading pornographic literature is also a sexual stimulant. Done alone, it can lead to sexual urges. When done together by couples, it has an effect similar to that of viewing pornographic films. With all the direct and side effects.

Now, do I recommend all these alluring themes as an essential item in a healthy married life? Not at all; but, the themes have been



discussed here, since the debate on all these themes are already there in the social mood.

So there is no need to shy away from them.

Spouse swapping: Now let me take the writing to the extreme theme of wife swapping. Or can it be called husband swapping? And then there is the concept of joint sex with other couples. Along with it is the theme of husbands allowing other men to fornicate their wives, to get voyeuristic pleasures. Then there are wives who arrange other women for their husbands. Well, all these are grey areas in terms of marital life. I am not in a position to put in my comment to define them as aberrations or benign adventures. It is possible that there are persons who derive much pleasure and thereby have more happier married lives, by following the routes dictated by these themes. There is much talk of a certain section of the so-called *officers and gentlemen* in our nation, really practising this as a diversion from their uneasy lifestyles. I do not know if there is much



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truth in this. Yet, there is a factor of truth that these things to do take place, in the confines of certain social interactions.

Yet, as a general theme for achieving marital happiness, I do believe that the practises of these ideas are fraught with extreme dangers. Especially, when living in small social spaces, with limited physical mobility. For, once the craving for bizarre gratifications that these exotic adventures lent has subsided, and life turns mundane again, then the themes, the incidences as well as the persons involved could come to haunt a person, when they are all struck in a small space frame. Naturally, when children grow up, the presence of other persons with some level of uncanny leverage right inside the family can disturb them.

Beyond all this, there is the reality of living in a feudal language nation. When one's wife become physically intimate with another man, the natural tendency is for the communication



to go beyond the confines of formal respect; that is, the addressing of the woman turns to the intimate or less respectful form. This change in communication really can exist and endure as a dominating power on the woman. It can, in times to come, disturb the woman, the husband, and later the children. And come to exist as a haunting apparition in social circles.

So when treading forbidden paths, let it be done only after a great deal of careful consideration of all factors has been done. Among the factors that need to be taken into deep consideration, is the reality of the existence of class in this nation, with each class existing within different intellectual parameters. To cross the non-tangible barriers that this has created in the social mood, with no proper understanding of its ramification, can really spoil a person's life forever. When thinking of any sexual partnership in the above



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mentioned themes, give deep thought to this essential factor.

Personally I do not recommend spouse swapping or any of its variations as a healthy venture for marital happiness. Yet, I cannot stand in judgement of another person's lifestyle and experiences.

**Seduction:** This theme does not really come into the domain of legitimate sexual pleasures in a married life. Rather, it is a theme that exists in sharp contradiction to it.

It is a fact that men do continuously aim to seduce other women. It is a lingering theme in their mind. Yet, many features of civilised living have developed so as to limit the activation of this instinctive mental mood.

The restraints: One's age, social position, official position, social status, non-availability of secure places, financial constraints, reputation, moral standards, lack of time, factors of earning livelihood and many other factors do



effectively control the mind's innate requirement to follow up on these themes. In many persons, these factors have developed to such an extent that they have effectively stopped thinking on these theme; and taken their mind to more realistic areas.

There are certain persons who do have an obsessive interest in this subject and practise it as a sort of personal challenge, and any success is counted as a personal success of the greatest level. Then there is some talk of some belief that seducing another man's wife can give some level of *tantrik* power to the individual. There was one very successful seducer of women who told me that there is a strange and bizarre pleasure in embezzling another man's rightful possession; meaning, seducing another man's wife; much more than he could ever derive from fornicating his own wife.



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In case anyone does not know it, many men do indulge in fantasising about having sex with other women, even another man's wife; and are ready to plan for such a chance. Now, there have been many attempts by men to do it. And the newspapers reports are there of many such incidences, which failed.

Now, one of the significant features of this type of actions is that it gets known only if the act of seduction is a failure. If it is a success, then very rarely does one come to know of it.

As far as wives are concerned, it is only safe to know that men do aim to seduce them. Using many guises. It is only a matter of having living experiences to ward off these aspirations. The uninitiated, inexperienced and the gullible can fall prey very easily. Also the uninformed.

In these matters, it is not good to stand in judgement of men. For, men are programmed to fornicate at any given moment, when other physical conditions are okay. This is an



instinctive behaviour. And to say that such behaviour is rare is not to see the obvious. For example, in Bombay, there are some 10 lakh prostitutes. And it is believed that each of them services a multitude of customers in a day. So a rough count of the number of persons who get serviced by them on any given day can be understood.

I have heard of one film producer giving out the word that he required ‘good looking girls who are *ready for compromises*, to act in his films’; the theme of ‘*casting couch*’ in Hindi films is now a famous theme.

One of the easiest techniques is the theme of helping the *damsel in distress*; that of arriving as the saviour knight, and loading her with heaps of gratitude. Or even worse, getting to understanding her vulnerabilities, including that of financial, and then bringing her into compromising positions, from where there is no way out. Once seduced, in many cases, it



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can end up a woman in a vicious circle of blackmail, and in positions of being lent to many other persons, mainly friends. Modern technologies like that of micro cameras do help immensely in blackmail.

Now, what is the context of seduction in a book on Married Life? Well, it is only to put in context the undercurrent of understanding that other men do get sexually attracted to any person's wife; and they may seek to get a suitable opportunity to satiate their desire. It is a theme, which many husbands may be aiming to achieve on some other person's wife; and at the same time, worried that his own wife is not sufficiently aware that she can be likewise seduced.

Yet, this is a theme that need not worry anyone who can steer clear of such issues; and can effectively be kept out of the purview of family debate.



## How to bring up children?

Another individual with same emotions: All parents should have a basic understanding that their children are not their material possessions, but individuals in their own right, having their own feelings, who have the same sensations of pain, vulnerability, shame, ego, individuality etc. A child, when he or she is born to a couple, is doing them a favour by coming out as their child, on whom they can shower affection, and attention. However, this person is not one to be battered with unspeakable words or unbearable physical assaults. The parent always had a choice to have a child or to go without one, but whether the child had a choice, we don't know. The general attitude of a parent when a child is due is to think that there is some one coming who can be used as functionary of one's wishes when he or she grows up. Moreover, after the initial days of exquisite petting, in the days of infancy, the training on the child is for this



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purpose. If the attitude of the parents is that of a slave master, in time, the child would grow up into the exact antithesis of what was aimed for. Yet, due to the external pressures exerted by the society, this underlying mentality may not be very discernible, until some incident happens which would bring out the contradictions.

What to fill the new computer: What all parents should understand is that when they get a newborn baby, they are getting an absolutely fresh brain or, let us say a computer with nothing inside it, including viruses. They have the choice to fill this exquisite computer with good things, or they can fill it with filth, and viruses. Here they have a tremendous responsibility. But sadly, very few, in fact, very, very few parents do rise up to the occasion. What they do is to inflict on this new brain all the nonsense, which they themselves are aware of, and irritations that they are themselves are accustomed to.



Choosing between the mediocre and the exceptional inputs: In our country, where the standard levels are of the mediocre, it is very much difficult to stand out of the herd. But the parents who would dare to take a stand and see that only the best is given to the child's brain as intellectual input, would reap the seeds of a very mature and contented individual growing up as their child, who they may treat, not as their slave, but as their affectionate companion. Here, by *intellectual*, I mean not the programming of crass, stereotyped, half-baked, pseudo-intellectual ideologies, but by the dynamic and vibrant liberal mental inputs. In which, the mind grows, not with inhibitions and fears, but with freedom acquired from lack of disturbances and harassment.

Now we can move beyond the realms of philosophy and go beyond into the basics.

There is no need here to go into the basic



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things that a parent should do when their child is born. For, almost everyone knows them.

An input of English music: It is known that music is good for the growth of the child's brain. From the early days itself, let a soft music be allowed to play near the place where the child is sleeping or lying. A cassette of good English nursery rhymes is what I would recommend. You may notice that the child is aware of the soft tones. It is said that music does improve the mathematical part of the brain. And, if it is possible, you may try this musical atmosphere, when the child is in the mother's womb itself. Possibly, it may have a benign effect on the general growth of the foetus.

At the same time, when the child is yet to be born, see that the mother does not get any mental tension, due to the effect of unkind words, or attitudes of anyone including the in-laws.



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The positive effects of gracious communication: From the moment the child is born, start communicating with it. Don't talk stupid things or nonsense. Instead, talk of the many things in nature, with a level of sound intelligence. There is no need to go in for buffoonery, or comic pretensions. The curious mind of the growing child will be eager to grasp all the new inputs. Let the child be taken to many corners of the area around the house and shown each and everything, and the name and functions may be told to it. One may be surprised to know, that the child would be imbibing all these information, with a level of fine intelligence. The moon, the stars, the sun, the mountains, the valleys, the vehicles and many other things of everyday life can be brought into this discussion. The child's brain's hardware connections will go on increasing and becoming complex as it gets exposed to more and more information. And it may be noted that maturity is heavily dependent on



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exposure to experience.

Causative of squint and other connected themes: When the child is lying in the cradle see that there are no things of bright colours in a specific direction, which attracts the attention of the child. For, such things, if they become sources of perpetual attention, could cause squint. And if there is squint in children, it may be remembered that it is easily curable through a minor medical procedure, if treated at an early age.

Another thing to note is that, when the child is being kept on the bed, or on the mat, the head should not always be in the same direction or slant. For, if the same position is always maintained, then a flattening of the head could develop on the side, which is constantly pressing on the mattress.

The intermittent annoyance: Don't allow each and every visitor to take the child in his or her hands. Politely, insist that the child does not



like it. Understand that, many persons do find an infant child, and for that matter, even big children, as ideal preys for practising their buffoonery and bullying. It is the duty of the parents to see that they don't get the chance to do it. For, the parent is responsible to the child, who has reposed its complete security in the persons who have chosen to be its parents.

**Visual inputs:** If the parents have vehicles, then it would be good to take the child out in it, whenever there is a chance to do it. For, the variety of visual inputs that the child will receive would do tremendous good to the growing brain.

**Learning swimming at an early age:** There is another thing, which can be done by some parents, but definitely not by all. That is, to teach the child to swim in water, at a very young age. Actually, it can be started at an age younger than one year, by introducing the child to the feel of being in water. And with careful



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supervision, the swimming instincts can be developed. But only parents who are good in swimming themselves, and know the intricacies involved in it should attempt this. Never allow this training in the absence of parents or of some other responsible and intelligent person. Moreover they should also understand the basics of treating a person who may have imbibed some water. At the same time, it may be remembered that if the child has learnt the basics of swimming, it becomes a sort of conditioned reflex, which will remain with the individual till the very end of his life.

**When the windpipe gets blocked:** At times a child may be eating a toffee, which may suddenly get stuck in its throat. The immediate effect of this is that the child will be unable of inhale in air; that is, there would be respiratory block. The child would be seen trying to gasp and grasping the air, with both the hands and legs stretched. This is actually a minor accident, if the aspects of saving the child are



properly understood. Take the child in the left palm, on its front part, and then give a slap to the back of the body. The toffee will be seen to eject out, with some force. What happens is that when the back is slapped, the rib case compresses, and the air in the chest cavity eject out with force, pumping out the blocking toffee from its path.

Or, a slight, sharp push to the diaphragm, from the lower side to the upper side, can also do the same trick. But, if instead of doing anything like this, the people around start making a wail and cry and run with the child to the nearest doctor, who may be quite, some distance away, then the accident may not be of minor significance.

When doing the back slap, bear in mind that the slap should not fall on the back of the head, for in case it falls there, the medulla oblongata will be damaged leading to more severe conditions. And the slap need not be



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violent. A soft one may suffice.

**Developing sense of balance and equilibrium:**  
During the early infancy, give enough opportunities to the child to build up its capacity of balancing, on its legs. Put him or her on the top of small walls, with careful supervision, so that the child's brain gets a feel of what it means to stand in the absence of the natural factors of equilibrium. This training also, may be done only with very careful supervision, and never on high places.

**Getting attuned to nature:** If the child does not have any innate disposition to illness, then it would not be a bad idea to allow the child to get slightly accustomed to such natural things as the rain, if the place of residence is far away from places of atmospheric pollution. In either case, the first few rains of a rainy season should be avoided, as they can cause illness in anybody. And again, it must be emphasised that this type of things should be done only



with children who don't have any natural tendency to catch fever and other illness, at the easiest opportunity.

Independence in a secure mental atmosphere: Allow the child a lot of independence. Let him (or her) be allowed to play on his (or her) own, without adult pestering. Do not allow any bystander or visitor to snatch a thing from its hands and make him or her cry for it. Also, don't allow anybody to come and nudge or pinch it, so as to make it show emotions, of distress and irritation. Believe me, when I say that each such sense of irritation and distress is being programmed into its mind, as a source of reference.

Mature response to intelligent queries: The child may have a lot of curious questions to ask. Don't allow a sense of silliness to hinder your duty to answer the questions with all the seriousness it deserves. Don't bother if anybody else is finding it ridiculous that you



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are answering the child as if it were an adult person. For, the child is yours to improve, and not his or hers to misguide. When answering your child's questions, do not go in for silly and idiotic answers. Answer in the most intelligent and comprehensible manner, and you will find that the next question of the child to be from that level.

Securing from immature attitudes: One of the things, you should protect your child from is the general attitude of silly persons who don't have much in their heads to come and bother your child with incessant and unnecessary questioning, to extract answers which are most obvious. Usually these persons ask silly questions, and crowd around it to hear it answer, and then they burst out into the most boisterous laughter, as if the child has perfumed a bit of the most comic buffoonery. Some persons would just not allow the child to stand on its feet, but would unnecessarily take the child up. Others would pinch the cheeks,



pull the ears and fondle the chin. When all these things are done by unknown persons and that too frequently, it can be a disturbance to the child, as it can be to anyone else. In all these cases, it may be understood that if the adult person admits that he is dealing with another individual, and exhibit a display of maturity in communication, immediately the child will also reciprocate and start behaving accordingly. But instead, if the adults aim to extract only the buffoonery from the child, it is needless to emphasize that the child would only exhibit this part of the personality.

Discourage attempts to create division: One of the things, the parents should never do is to ask the child, which of the parent he or she likes best. And also, don't allow anyone else to ask such questions to the child. Usually the child will answer that he or she likes both the parents equally. But some misguided persons may go on pestering to make the child make a comparison and express a favour for one of



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them. See that such persons don't have much access to communicating with your child. And you should always talk of both of you, the parents, as one.

**Exposing to conducive attitudes:** There should be continuous expressions of affections for your child from you. And also, an expression of deep mutual affection for your spouse should also be exhibited in the presence of your child. In fact, this display of mutual respect and endearment between the parents is a thing, which would give a lot of mental security to your child. As mentioned earlier, the best thing a father can do to the child is to have love for its mother. And on the mother's part also, the effect is similar.

**Preventing persons of doubtful cultural qualities:** See that your child is not made the companion of all persons, of all kinds of standards. By standards, I mean the mental and cultural standards. For, persons of



different cultural and social standards have different conceptions of how to behave to children. For, example a woman who has lived as a housewife, keeping a low profile and more or less kept in subjugation by her family members will have her own ideas as to how a female child should be communicated to. In most cases, this may be just a reflection of how she is being treated. In general, it may be borne in mind that persons, who are unintelligent and are in suppressed social environment would not, in many cases, allow a young child much individuality, unless it is the child of someone who they maintain as a social superior. In the latter case, they may like to treat the child with the same superiority as they display to their parents, which also is not an ideal level of communication. Let your child be a companion of persons, who are of the type, you would like to be with.

It is not good that you allow your child to move in the company of all children that your child



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may have chanced to become friendly with. In this, you should have your own ideas as to what type of company he or she should have. A little help should be extended to your child, in getting these friends, even if it means that you should take your child to the house of such children and take the initiative to introduce them to your child. But, this factor of choosing a friend for your child may not be easy in small villages, but in big towns and cities, it is not a problem, for, there are enough and more persons there, to choose from.

The benefits of reading: Reading to your child is a very good thing, which can have long-term benign effects on the development of the mental calibre of your child. Parents who are good in English should read English stories also to their child, for, an early initiation into English comprehension, is a very good thing that a parent can do to their offspring. While reading, let the parent take real interest in the stories, and if possible display the same type



of passions the child is getting as the story develops.

Physical and mental battering: Let there be more of laughter and less of despondency in the general atmosphere of the child. Do not use snapping tones, or hurting words to your child. If unnecessarily hurt by the parent, by spiteful words and if it a regular pattern, a sort of *lump in the throat* of grief and wretchedness could stifle a child's personality. Continuous assault with such effect could have serious negative effect on the mental and physical growth of a child. He may have feeble voice, and suffer from an inability to move among his companions with composure, in the presence of his parents. Moreover, the chance of his or her brain going to a programme of despondency and despair, in later life in the presence of his parents and their voice, is very much there. The aim of the intelligent parent should be to improve the stature and self-esteem of the child, as much as possible. By



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doing so, they in return get a son or daughter who is capable and of well balanced mental and physical capacities.

**Advises, obedience and rebellion:** It is good to tell the child, about all the dangers one may discern, all round the place. A child, who has been brought up in a free environment would immediately absorb all the points and would stick to the parental guidance. But, a child who had the experience of rebelling against the parental ill-treatment may not easily imbibe the spirit of advice, for he or she may see in it a chance to exhibit his or her resentment for some other parental action.

**The enduring incentives of conversational walks:** Whenever, anyone of the parents is having time, take the child for long walks. Let all these walks be interspersed with talking between the child and the parent on various subjects. Always talk on positive things, and sweet subjects. At the same time, let the child



also have some understanding of the problems of the parents, at a minor level. The parent should build up within himself or herself a sort of respect for the growing intellect of the child. But it would be a grave mistake to make the child a showpiece to all the others in the neighbourhood, or among the family friends.

**On using anomalous terms:** In many of our vernacular languages, there are many words, which may mean both intimacy and also, a downgrading of a person. It is better not to use such words to your child; not because he or she may feel inhibited by those words, but that it gives the same licence to the others in the vicinity to behave likewise to your child.

**On the major theme of education of children:** Now in our country, having a stature is not a thing that everybody appreciates. Especially, if other attributes like good financial background, family status etc. doesn't go with it. When putting your child in a school, this may be a



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major concern if you have brought up your child with a dignified personality. For, not all schoolteachers are equipped to tolerate such individuality in children. For, many persons go in for teaching in our country, when they have exhausted other options. Or they find this as a shortcut to social veneration.

Actually, this problem is more in the vernacular, government schools, many of which are just meant to serve as sources of earning for the so-called teachers. But then there are good teachers also, but there may be numerically insignificant.

Among the private schools also, one need to scrutinise the quality of the environment, a school can provide. This really depends on the quality of the teachers, and not on the fine buildings that the management has been able to build. And the quality of the teachers, has no connection with the academic qualification, they may have, for they do not mean much. In



this regard, an understanding of what the parents need to inculcate in the child would help.

But on the whole, in our country, it may be said that the private management schools provide better quality education than the government ones. And, generally the English medium is better than the vernacular medium.

**Medium of education:** Along with this, the question of what medium of education should be provided to your child comes in. By all means, go in for the English medium. For one, it provides your child with a window to the world which he or she can open at will and browse the whole horizon of knowledge. Otherwise, he or she would be accessing this horizon through the eyes of mediocre translators, who may have their own vested interest in seeing that your child doesn't learn English. Secondly, your child will be less susceptible to the inhibitions that naturally exist



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in the form of *hierarchy* in the vernacular languages. More can be discussed on this topic, but then it may go beyond the requirements of this book. {See my other books}. But, always bear in mind that the political leaders, and the bureaucrats of our country, all see that their children get the best English education, either here or have then educated in English-speaking countries like England, America etc., while at the same time declaiming the virtues of the vernacular to the common folk here.

Inputting information: Actually, in the very early years itself the parents can make the child used to words and pictures, by reading and showing the words and pictures. And, simple arithmetical problems can be solved using the fingers, in a playful manner. Let the child just watch, and you will be surprised that actually the child is absorbing the facts that you had shown, for the next day itself, the child will be asking you questions in regard to these things.



The liberal attires: Now we come into the question of the attire of your child. It is always good to go in for the modern dressings, which include the shorts, shirts, pants etc. For boys it may not be a problem, but for girls living in small towns and villages, modern dressing may be a problem, for the others in the society may feel intimidated, and hence may try to disturb your daughter by indulging in verbal abuse from the roadsides. But, if the parents and their daughter have the mental guts, then there is no reason, that being in a small town or village should inhibit a female from wearing the dress of their choice. Girls can then have a wide variety of dresses to choose from, like the skirt, frock etc. in addition to the dresses mentioned above. In this context it may be mentioned that modern dresses, especially in the case of girls, give more freedom of movement, which may come in handy in moments of danger, like when the bus or building is on fire. Or when they want to go in



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for games like football etc. And hence, it is good for the female child to get used to these types of dresses at an early age. It may be noted that many of the girls in the cities are used to these types of dresses.

There is a general atmosphere in many families to show a distinction between the stature of the male and female children. In such families, boys are sometimes thought of as of more value, while the girls are given training in subdued behaviour. And in some houses, the reverse takes place, wherein the girls are given more value than the boys, even though this attitude is very rare. Both these attitudes are wrong, and in modern times, it is good to bring up both genders with equal importance.

**Gender issues:** An early induction to the habit of reading should be made in your children. In bringing about this habit, both the parents should take deep interest. Try to give only



interesting books, which have a readable quality to it, to the child. Don't start with patriotic and moral books, for in most cases they are badly written, and may turn off the reading habit of the growing child. In this case, the books of *Enid Blyton* may be tried, for it has been seen that her writing does catch the child's imagination, and put him or her on a track of the reading habit. There are many similar books available of similar quality, which can grip the child to this habit.

**Hassle-free physical training:** Along with this, right from the pre-school years, you should take your child to the public park or maiden, if there is no space in your compound, and make him or her do some running and jumping games, which he or she would enjoy immensely. These things could help your child built up his or her stamina, and muscles, which may stand him or her in good stead in later years.



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Allowing boisterous attitudes: Allow your child to talk loudly and clearly. Don't snap at him, if his or her voice is loud, for let them give enough and more exercise to their voice boxes, when it can be done at an age when it won't cause much offence. And in most such cases, the children would grow up with a refined voice, which is not a bad thing in itself. But teach them also the etiquette of how to use this sound in a very inoffensive and peaceful manner.

Viewing good TV channels: Too much TV watching may not be good, especially if the stuff is all of rubbish themes. But nothing much can be done about it, for TV has come to be a thing that is as inevitable as sleeping and waking. But, along with this, parents who are interested in getting their children to pick up the basics of English-speaking may make it a point that the children should strictly watch BBC news everyday for at least half an hour. This thing, which may be done as a part of the



mental training for the family as a whole, can give the children real inputs with regard to ways and manners of English speaking, and give them the exposure to the right pronunciations. Above all, it could give them a view of the happenings in the world. BBC is recommended here, because it still remains the best in terms of many aspects of presentation, which also include the theme of the *right-dignified posture*.

**On learning music:** There are many things that a child, who is at a period in life when the brain is very fertile, can be made to learn. One is music. Let your child start learning a music instrument at an early age. Either put your child in a music school, during the evenings on odd days, or get him or her to learn from a private tutor. Skills learnt at an early age can do wonders, and will remain with them for a long time.

**Learning computers:** Another thing they can



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learn is that of computers. Actually learning to use computers is very easy. In fact it may be said that it is one of the easiest things among the so many things a man has to learn. It is so, because so much intelligence has been put into its development, that anybody with the most average intelligence can learn to use it within a short period of time. Only thing is that you should have a computer. Try to get a computer for your child.

Once you have a computer bought for your son or daughter, install games in it. Computer games are good, for they may develop the finer skills of the brain. However, there should be other things other than games also inside the computer.

Allow your child to use the computer with freedom, for unless somebody bangs on it with force, nothing will happen to it in ordinary circumstances. And if your child is taught to use the keyboard, then he or she can use it



with ease. Other than teaching your child to paint on it, he or she can be taught to use the various manoeuvres in such applications as MS Word, MS PowerPoint, Adobe PhotoShop etc.

**Learning typing skills:** If possible install a *typing tutor* programme, on the computer. You may then instruct your son or daughter to practise on this program. If this is done, you will be surprised to note that the small child is picking up the basics of typing very fast. For, it may be remembered that typing speed will help in the fast use of computers.

**Revering your child:** Have a healthy respect for your child, and try to understand his or her compulsions. The atmosphere at home should be such that the children should feel free to communicate with the parents on whatever they want to speak about. In some families, the fathers feel it beneath their dignity to display an attitude of communication to their children.



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This is a very negative attitude, and is just a vestige of the old feudal systems once prevalent in our country.

Beyond all this, never use your child as a serving person to bring the odd things like a cup of water, a pen, a paper etc. These things can be asked for in a friendly tone, and not as one of command. Moreover, when the child asks you to get something like that, you should also oblige likewise.

**Indoor games:** There are so many indoor games that can be played at home. In these games, the parents can also participate with the children. When such games are being played, along with parental participation, the parents get a real opportunity to build up attitudes of sportsmanship, fairness, honesty, following the rules and its spirit, patience etc. in their children. But, here the parents have a real responsibility to display these qualities themselves, otherwise their negative attributes



will immediately be picked up by their offspring, with an attitude of licence.

Actually, the parents should make it a point to use these games to condition these finer qualities in their children. Other than that, these games should be used to sharpen the qualities of intelligence, ingenuity, logic, sharpness, mental speed etc. Games that are traditionally used as indoor games include Snake and Ladder, Monopoly, Mastermind, Scrabble, Dominoes, Puzzles, Building Blocks, Chess etc. Though all games proceed on the basis of the competitive spirit in the participants, it should be noted that a trait of gambling should not be developed in the children, by the use of such incentives as money and other such incentives. And the parent should have an idea of the difference between games and gambling.

**Solitary pursuits, as well as group activities:** As the child grows up, there should be conscious



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effort to see that he or she is having enough movement among his or her friends, and at the same time putting equal interest in solitary pursuit like reading, studying etc.

Each child as a separate individual: As the children grow up, let them grow up as persons of individuality of their own, for it may be understood that everyone is ultimately different, having their own tastes and philosophies. Let a mentality of frankness and maturity be built in them. These attributes don't come on their own, but from the parental attitude to them. If the parents and the other family members treat them as individuals of maturity, then they would exhibit such attributes. Otherwise, they would exhibit the lack of these qualities.

Parameters of masculinity as well as of femininity: Now, it may be understood that boys should grow up with masculinity and girls with femininity. But, this masculinity should be



moulded with the mental attitudes of social etiquette, culture and refinement; and femininity should be sharpened with the attributes of courage, courtesy, and dignity.

Examples and exemplary stances: Moreover the parents should induce the qualities of truthfulness, sense of commitment, punctuality, neatness, polite behaviour, feelings of compassion, honesty etc. in these growing individuals. This they can do best by practising these qualities themselves to the world at large. But how the ordinary bureaucrats of our country are going to display such qualities to anyone, being seeped in corruption themselves, is a moot question. For, they always must bear in mind that whatever dishonesty they do in their professional capacity, there will be a price to pay, at the end. Retribution may come *in the guise of* children.



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### Acknowledging the reality of class, and its implications on family relationships

There is a word ‘*class*’ in English; and naturally it should mean some feature of an English society. For the reality is that there are classes in England also.

Distortion in sense: Yet, when we use the same word ‘*class*’ in our Indian social meanings, it does acquire a qualitative different sense and meaning. Actually this is the same case with many English words, when being given a sense connected to the Indian social reality. Though the meanings may seem similar, the total effects of either are entirely different. I cannot go more into this theme here; readers who are interested in knowing more about this theme may refer to my other book connected to language codes.

Indian social structure is riddled with class feelings. Actually in earlier times, it would have been easy to identify these feelings, and also



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the connected social attributes with ‘caste’. Now the connections have become slightly vague, as persons have tended to move from the vocations dictated by their caste strictures.

In my book, ‘March of the Evil Empires: English verses feudal languages’ I have delineated how the growth and strengthening of castes in India are intimately connected to the essential feudalism or hierarchy in the vernacular languages.

Linking ‘caste’ with vocation and to language: Basically caste and also hierarchical usages in the languages are linked to the profession of the concerned persons. Now with the persons in differing castes opting for professions, which are having varying social statuses, the same issue of hierarchy in infecting them also.

Intellectual rather than physical: It wouldn’t be proper for me to debate more on this theme here; but the essential point that I would like to make here for the purpose of this book is that



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the dividing aspect of class is actually intellectual rather than physical.

Persons differ in what they think about, behave culturally, the cultural standard of their spoken dialect, the way they place women and children in their communication structure, and the whole theme is connected to the postures they use when they sit, the gestures they use during talking, the type of persons with whom they are at ease and would instinctively connect to, and many other things.

Now, in modern times, it is a wee bit difficult to find persons in a small town or a minor area in a city who can be defined accurately as belonging to a particular class. Yet, it is possible to say with a lot of definiteness whether two persons belong to equivalent classes or to differing ones.

**Measuring the classes:** It is not easy, wise or correct to say that one class is above another. For, I have found that the dominance of each



class can be different in different geographical locations, and among differing groups of persons. And usually when trying to find an immediate hierarchy, the most tangible aspect to look for is the financial aspect. And in financial aspects, any group of persons can show strength in a particular locality or time period.

The English speaking class: Again, the level of knowing English, using it in social communication, and also the number of companions one has with whom one converses in English also creates a strange level of class feeling. For, once a person converses in English, and establishes a social circle in this language, a lot of ordinary Indian dithering social communications systems gets blocked, and a new energetic, positive social relationship develop. This also is a class.

What I am trying to convey is that the reality and parameters of class are a bit beyond the



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usual measures that is usually used, such as finance, job, government position etc.

Class as different from quality: Yet, persons who belong to a particular profession naturally do tend to develop a certain class attributes. But then, this definition can again be at variance with what we define as 'Class', as something of superior attributes.

And again, do not mix up the term 'class' with anything like individual inimical ethical standards like alcoholism, womanising etc. or the lack of such tendencies. For, one may find persons with delinquent cravings in all classes.

Now, even though I have tried to convey a sense of what all attributes can create a class, it may be emphasised that they do not limit it, to any particular category of attributes. And to bring this debate to the present context, I may say that one is at much ease mentally if one finds one's companions of one own intellectual class.



Here even though money is generally used as a measuring yard to measure, I have found that in these modern times, this measuring stick is absolutely inadequate for this purpose. For, in many places in our nation, a lot of social upheavals have taken places, which has contravened the connection of money with class.

Now all these talk about class is done here, just to bring this theme into the context of marriage relationships.

A recipe for mental peace: One can get the best mental peace if one is married to a person from one's own class. For, each class has a communication dialect, which retains a particular social structure. In this structure, all individuals are necessarily arranged in a particular design; with each person's relation to another person or groups of persons, in a predefined manner.



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When one marries a person from the same class, then there is no essential disturbance to this non-tangible, yet very strong social structure. Everyone functions as they always did.

If a woman marries a person from a more refined communication dialect class, then it is possible that she may at first feel the positive halo of the refined communication system. Yet, in the long run, the effect may wear off, for her husband may get distracted by the social demands in the more crude communication dialect, being made on him by his wife's relations. And his distractions could lead to problems with his wife.

A woman from the refined communication dialect is not well advised to marry a man from the less refined communication dialect, unless they plan after marriage to live faraway from her husband's relatives. For, she may find it difficult to endure the crudeness of the words



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used to her and about her, by her husband's relatives. The more cruder the dialect, the more is the claim they have over her personal issues, and mental standards. Now, this is a theme that has no corresponding themes in pristine English.

A female government employee marrying a common man: Then there is the aspect of a female government employee marrying a person who is not a government employee. In many vernaculars, and their social systems, this event is fraught with immense dangers. If the husband is rich, and socially prominent on his own and the wife is docile and very affectionate, then the negativity may be much warded off. Otherwise the strange programs in the feudal vernacular codes can wreak havoc on their family life. Generally in many vernaculars, the government employees are placed in a higher social position, while the common man is placed a wee bit below. Not only that, when the government employees talk



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about, or refer to a common man, they generally use the lower level words, about them; and in some cases to them.

This strange strangling program in the vernacular naturally induces a sort of disdain and aversion for the common man among the government employees. It may be noted that the government employees consistently use terms of respect, when referring to their colleagues and superiors.

There is a cumulative social affect of this communication aspect. And its affects will naturally affect the wife's mentality in regard to her husband. More so, as she perceives him to be toiling with progressive lessening of social security, while she sees a lot of her colleagues living lives of feudal prominence.

An aversion for her husband's capacities, and also for his companions can come up. Moreover, their home could also be the meeting place of her husband's colleagues.



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Her own colleagues wouldn't like to belittle themselves by being in close proximity to the common men. So they may express their dislike for coming to her house. Or if they do come, there may be a continuing stance of social separation.

All these could mar the married life. Yet, this could also be only an extreme case. For, there are many husbands who literally enjoy the social security in terms of lifelong financial benefits that can accrue to his wife, and also the social status that rubs on him, through his wife.

The success of this partnership again depends on their mutual compatibility. I have only discussed the undercurrents.

**The enwrapping enclosures:** Now, we may move from between the spouses, to the other relatives. Generally, in vernacular living conditions, any person who marries into the family, either of the male or the female, is



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wrapped in words, that emphasises the fact that he or she is a subordinate to the innumerable uncles, aunts, elder brothers, elder sisters, senior cousins, and many others of the spouse, including anyone who the spouse treats as senior. The new comer is given the freedom to use the same level of dominance on the innumerable younger members of the family.

Now, how much leverage the senior relatives give to the new individual depends on a number of factors. One of the main factors here is their cultural standard, and also the level of knowledge in English. When the dialect culture is cruder, or lesser is their knowledge in English, the more would be their strength. Here it may not be understood that usually there is any visible level of competition, for generally the new comer is attuned to accepting the dominance of many of the new senior relatives; and also willing to place a similar stance on the junior relatives.



The problem will arise only if there is severe disparity between the social communication standards of the new comer and that of the senior relatives. Then it can be either an initiation of a real tug of war, or a life of silent bearing.

Now if the situation is vice versa, with the newcomer being of cruder communication system, also, there is a chance of aversion for this person from at least some members of the family. Again, it all depends on many other factors also.

Usually persons do marry along marked lines of social codes. Nothing untoward happens. Only when there is a marked deviation from these codes do all these themes come into play.

**The intimate zone:** Now with more spread of English, the concept of nuclear family is gaining ground. Yet, the majority do still have mental moods of a joint family system. That is



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the spouse's immediate family members, and others like uncles, aunts etc. would come with a claim of right to interfere or intrude into the affairs of a nuclear family. Yet, the amount of right they have is only proportional to the amount of leverage the corresponding spouse lends them. If he or she clearly shows the limits beyond which they have no right to interfere, then their married life will not be disturbed to that extent. Here again, do not get the impression that the uncles or aunts are of inimical interests or of delinquent minds. It may be just that this is the way they have been trained in their own family life.

The actual structural strength of the joint family system exists embedded in the hierarchical language system. So it is natural that all persons who adhere to its philosophy would only carry the theme of mutually connected family relationships. They would be only eager to establish and extend the links to the newer generations.



In all these situations, what ultimately saves the day is the attachment of the spouse for his or her partner. If there is an acute vagueness in the spouses' mind about his or her responsibility to his or her partner, then there can be real problems. And it shall remain as an enduring example of marital irresponsibility; which can lead to severe repercussions.

**Class as encoded in profession:** There is another fallout or corollary to the whole question of class. This factor has no connection with the actual intellectual class of the person involved. It is more or less connected to a person's profession or so to say, vocation. Generally in our nation, persons enter into a profession or vocation, and remain there till the end of their working life. It is true that many do endeavour continuously to escape any tedious, menial or any other lesser levels of profession. Here it must be understood that generally in our nation, most the jobs that require actual physical



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participation is considered lower, and those that generally allows a man to sit at the other side of a table is considered to be socially acceptable.

Each vocation or level of profession or job is encrypted in our hierarchical languages in a particular level of words, phrases and position. This encryption, more or less, defines a person's social mobility, his capacity for articulation, and the ambit of freedom of intellectual expression. Along with this goes the general requirement of society to measure and evaluate a person, and to give him a particular mark, so as to enable them to place him in a particular social position.

Now, it is a universal phenomenon to measure a person by his companions and other associates of his or hers. So what happens when a person gets stuck with persons of lesser or higher social attributes is that, he or she is immediately bracketed with his visible



relatives. When the words, expressions and phrases connected to him, in the vernacular changes according to this new evaluation, it may be the cause of grievous distress, especially if he or she does not really belong to that intellectual or social class.

Here in many cases, the evaluation of the society may be more in connection with their own minor understanding or lack of it. The less mobile the society or persons are, the more cruder would be their evaluation standards.

The problem here would be that actually none of the persons involved, that is the relatives, their companions, their associates, the society at large in the small area or even the newcomer would be inherently bad or of any inimical mental standards. Yet, the whole interactions would create a lot of severe mental distress to the new comer, and possibly to a lot of others.



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Yet, may I just intrude to say that all what have been described in this chapter is only a delineation of the extreme cases? However they can be used to understand some of the undercurrents of family tensions.

**Class in forbidden areas:** Beyond all this, I need to take the debate to the forbidden themes of spouse swapping and other themes, of which I have already dealt with. I had made certain sweeping statements about this theme in the previous chapter. Here I only interlude to mention that in that propositions also, kindly bear in mind the themes of class discrepancy.

This theme should be placed in a variety of contexts like that of extramarital affairs, adulterous relationships and many other dubious themes. A hint to the consequences of what happens in a feudal vernacular area, when persons step outside the demarcated lines of acceptable intimacies is seen in the novel by Arundhathi Roy: **A god of small things.**



(Actually this book deals with this theme; yet, I feel that many of the persons who debated about this book, seems to have missed this point totally).

**Millstones and elevators:** Now let me deal with one more aspect connected to the theme of '*class*'. Generally after marriage, during the vicissitudes of life, there might come times in life when the husband strives to move ahead in social standing. In a certain sense, this social climbing, or professional advancement, or even business restructuring can require a definite level of subduing of certain social connections, which were not very intimate; and then building up newer social contacts, which are in par with the requirements of the new social/positional/business levels.

Actually if both the husband as well as the wife, are from the same level of social class, it is possible that there shall be a synchronised effort in this effort for social or positional or



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business advancement. But then, if there is any chance that there is a disparity between the innate intellectual classes of the spouses, the momentum for the social leap would be with different speeds. In such cases, as one of the spouses strives to catch up higher grounds, he or she would find that the other is lagging behind with deliberate intentions. In such cases, the second person would remain as a millstone tied to the neck of the other. In effect this person with speed would have to drag the other, to the heights; thereby losing his or her own speed. And in a competitive world, this can really cripple a struggling individual.

**Strings to the impenetrable levels:** Again, if one of the spouses is going to deeper levels of social interaction, and the other spouse cannot bear such levels, then also, a tendency for the family to exist in varying levels would come about. Either of these cases is a highly dangerous situation for the family; with



chances of real breakdown of relationship, very much in the offing.



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